

### "Some Mistakes" of Ingersoll.

At the recent funeral service for Robert G. Ingersoll, selections were read by friends, from his own publications. One was entitled "My Religion," which he called the religion of reason, the creed of science. We readily acknowledge that Ingersoll made no mistake in beautifying his life by walking according to the precepts therein enunciated. His mistake was in the misnomer of his creed; or rather in the derivation of his creed. His creed was all right; his practice of it may have been all right; it may even be that it squared with the deductions of reason and the light of science. He erred, however, in assigning the origin of it, either to reason or to science. It went far beyond these. It came from that God whom he ignorantly worshipped yet professedly despised. It described the character of that God. It was that God in his revealings. It was that God in action. Had not that blessed Being made a revelation of Himself in the Word which Ingersoll was accustomed to hold up to ridicule, we would not have had Ingersoll's profession of the Religion of Reason and His Creed of Science. And had not His Divine Spirit brooded over the heart, Ingersoll would never have practised the creed which he set forth in his beautiful phraseology. In other words, his creed is really a deduction from the teachings and the influence of the Bible.

Ingersoll made another mistake in his intellectual construction of a God, and calling it the God of the Bible, and saying that he hated such a God. This was not the God which the Bible sets forth. Right here he was mistaken. It was simply the God which Ingersoll himself set forth, and wrongly called the God of the Bible. He was far from being fair in this delictic conception. He took the very worst things he could find in the Bible, detached from all proper connection, shorn of every particle of their inner and true teachings, and framed these into a caricature, and then called it the God of the Bible. Had he taken the many beautiful things of the Bible and woven them into an intellectual conception, he would have come nearer to the God of the Bible. As it was, he took the beautiful teachings of the Bible and the beautiful influences of the Bible, without giving the Bible any credit, and framed them into a creed, and called it the "Religion of Reason" and the "Creed of Science," not knowing that this religion and creed was simply the reflection of the Blessed Being, whom he attempted to caricature.

Again, this Ingersoll not only made theological mistakes, but he made logical mistakes. Ignoring prayer, and the comforts and uplifting power of spiritual communion, he yet confessed with Ernest Renan, that Jesus was the most beautiful and perfect character that ever existed. But Christ lived in communion with His Father, often retiring to the mountains to pray to Him, and returning with the Divine uplift upon His soul. Now if Ingersoll was consistent with logical deductions, he would not only have admitted the possibility of spiritual communion, but he would have practiced it, and been benefited by it. He would himself more fully come up to the standard of the perfect man, and imitated Him in His spiritual communion.

In confessing to an approximation of perfection and yet refusing to imitate the example, shows not only his own logical inconsistency, but it additionally shows how very far he was himself from that perfection which he admitted in another.

Again, Ingersoll made a serious mistake for himself and others, in repressing his own soul longings, and not using them to mount up to better things, and in aiding to give others a tighter hold upon what is immortal. Instead of glorying in the name of God's life in the better sense, he rejoiced in the name of Agnostic, and affirmed that nothing could

be known of spiritual existences nor anything predicated of spiritual possibilities. And yet with the determination to assume and maintain this attitude, he could not completely blot out all soul longings. In the beautiful tribute to his dead brother, he says: "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." Again, in one of his poems, he says:

"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."  
Now in these expressions, "hope sees a star," "listening love can hear the rustle of a wing," and "we hope and wait," we see the soul actively manifesting itself. The hope so softly breathed forth, is the soul reaching out and taking hold of its soul right, the soul pointing to its destiny. This sentiment, breaking through the fetters of a strong determination to live and die the agnostic, shows the mistake he made in trying to commit soul suicide. He would have been happier, he would have made others happier, had he, like Tennyson in his "In Memoriam" and "The Two Voices," encouraged the soul in its upward flight instead of throttling its feeble pulsations.—Christian Intelligencer.

### A Wasted Day.

The day is done,  
And I, alas! have wrought no good,  
Performed no worthy task of thought or deed,  
Albeit small my power, and great my need  
I have not done the little that I could.  
With shame o'er forfeit hours I brood—  
The day is done.

One step behind,  
One step through all eternity—  
Thus much to lack of what I might have been;  
Because the tempter of my life stole in  
And took a golden day away from me;  
My highest height can never be—  
One step behind.

I cannot tell  
What good I might have done this day,  
Of thought or deed, that still, when I am gone,  
Had long, long years gone singing on and on,  
Like some sweet fountain by the dusty way;  
Perhaps some word that God would say—  
I cannot tell.

—Selected.

### Beware of Misjudging.

Perhaps it were better for most of us to complain less of being misunderstood, and to take more care that we do not misunderstand other people. It ought to give us pause at a time to remember that each one has a stock of cut-and-dry judgments on his neighbors and that the chances are that the most of them are quite erroneous. What our neighbor really is we may never know, but we may be pretty certain that he is not what we have imagined, and that many things we have thought of him are quite beside the mark. What he does we have seen, but we have no idea what may have been his thoughts and intentions. The mere surface of his character may be exposed, but of the complexity within we have not the faintest idea. People crammed with self-consciousness and self-conceit are often praised as humble, while shy and reserved people are judged to be proud. Some whose life is one subtle, studied selfishness get the name of self-sacrifice, and other silent heroic souls are condemned for want of humanity.—Ian Maclaren, in The Potter's Wheel.

### God's Music Lesson.

This is the heading that George Matheson, D.D., the blind preacher and brilliant writer of Edinburgh, gives to a homily on the passage from Revelation xvi. 3: "And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." The homily is as follows:—

"There are songs which can only be learned in the valley. No art can teach them; no master of music can convey them; no rules of voice can make them perfectly sung. The music is in the heart. They are songs of memory, of personal experience. They bring out their burden from the shadows of the past; they mount on the wings of yesterday. What race that never felt the pangs of exile could sing that old Scottish song, 'Oh, why left I my home?' It could only come from the memory of storm and stress driving the wanderer across many a sea. St. John says that even in heaven there will be a song that can only be fully sung by the sons of the earth—the strain of redemption. Doubtless it is a song of triumph—a hymn of victory to the Christ who made us free. But the sense of triumph must come from the memory of the chain. No angel, no archangel can sing it so sweetly as my soul. To sing it as I sing it they must pass through my exile, and this they cannot do. None can learn it but the children of the cross.

"And so, my soul, thou art receiving a music lesson from the Father. Thou art being educated for the choir invisible. There are parts of the symphony that none can take but thee. There are cords too minor for the angels. There may be heights in the symphony which are beyond thy scale—heights in the symphony which the angels alone can reach. But there are depths which belong to thee, and can only be touched by thee. Thy Father is training thee for the part the angels cannot sing, and the school is sorrow. I have heard men say that He sends thy sorrow to prove thee; nay, He sends thy sorrow to educate thee, to train thee for the choir invisible. In the night He is preparing thy song. In the valley He is tuning thy voice. In the cloud He is deepening thy chords. In the storm He is enriching thy pathos. In the rain He is sweetening thy melody. In the cold He is moulding thine expression. In the transition from hope to fear He is perfecting thy lights and shade. Despise not thy school of sorrow, O my soul! It will give thee a unique part in the universal song."

Rejoice, O grieving heart!  
The hours fly fast;  
With each some sorrow dies,  
With each some shadow flies,  
Until at last  
The red dawn in the east  
Bids weary night depart,  
And pain is past.  
Rejoice, then, grieving heart,  
The hours fly fast—Adelaide Proctor.

### Tenderness.

Tenderness does not mean weakness, softness, effeminateness. It is consistent with strength, manliness, truth and bravery. It does not show itself alone in the touch, but in unselfishness, thoughtfulness, consideration, forbearance, patience, long-suffering. But however it shows itself, it is as the bloom on the peach, as spring showers on the earth, as the music of the angels stealing down on the plains of Bethlehem. You may not have much of this world's wealth to distribute, but you may give something better and spend a useful and beneficent life if you will practice this lesson of shedding around you the grace of human tenderness, in word and act and by the spirit of your life.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.