

Theistic, and instead of being preëminently conducive to the prolongation and enjoyment of life, which is the Spencerian test of all morality, it led its first teacher by a direct path to an early and painful death. So that if Christianity, in any form, is to be the Ethics of the future, the end of Theism, apparently, is not yet.

— Some uneasiness has been produced, in certain quarters, by the announcement that Mr. Ingersoll is to lecture at different places in Canada. No one, we trust, will be so ill-advised and so sadly devoid of faith in the ultimate prevalence of truth as to attempt to interfere with perfect freedom of discussion. If a belief cannot hold its own against platform ridicule, the sooner it makes way for one that can, the better. Religion has survived Voltaire, the shafts of whose mockery were a good deal keener and brighter than those to which it is at present exposed. Not that we mean to express sympathy with any one who cultivates in his hearers or readers the unhappy and ignoble spirit of irreverence. To the conscientious student and inquirer, however liberal he may be, however thoroughly he may have cast off the shackles of dogma and tradition, the exhibition of that spirit is as repulsive as it can be to any priest. It is in fact the evidence of a fanaticism not less narrow in its way than that of the priest. A truly liberal and comprehensive mind would never regard the religion of Christendom as a proper object of disrespect, much less of insult.

We had ourselves the advantage of hearing Mr. Ingersoll in the States. The lecture had evidently been well studied as a platform performance and, in that point of view, was highly effective; though we could not help mentally drawing a contrast between the performer and the Christian preacher, who, on Mars' Hill, delivered the truths he bore at once with the dignity of simple earnestness, and with perfect tenderness towards the beliefs which he came to supersede. The tone would, we think, have seemed offensive to any sensible and right-minded man.