

WHAT DO YOU GIVE US?

What do you offer instead of what you are taking away from us? we are often asked. The fact of the matter is, no rationalist is trying to take anything away from you. He is not advocating the making of any laws to prevent you from praying to or worshipping Jesus. You are the parties who are taking something from others. You are not satisfied with liberty to rest on the Sabbath and worship Jesus; you also make laws to curtail the liberties of other people who do not wish to worship Jesus. You directly and indirectly make others pay for a show in which they do not wish to take part. Therefore the rationalist is justified in giving his reasons for not joining in your worship or paying for those who conduct the performance. While you profess to love your enemies, you do all the injury you can directly and indirectly to those who do not believe in the efficacy of your performance.

Why should any one quarrel with his neighbor for a difference of opinion about what did or did not take place two thousand years ago, three or four thousand miles away? Your Religion is full of contradictions. You ought to know that a man cannot be made to believe anything by tyranny and coercion. You make a man a hypocrite by frightening him to give a verbal consent to what you tell him to save trouble, but you ought to know that that is not the proper way to convince one of the truth of your religion. Besides, if God loves mankind and if He wants them to love and worship Him, can't He teach them so, the same as He makes the sun to shine and the rain to fall without your assistance. Can't He give us a revelation now to suit the occasion without forcing us by pains and penalties to believe in things that you know no more about than we do. In fact, you don't know anything about the matter at all—you only think you do. They were impressed on your mind in early youth by interested parties, the same as a writing is made on a piece of paper or on a slate, and you had no choice in the matter. (Locke.)

'All well informed people know now that man lived on the earth more than six thousand years, that there is no reason