

THE SEARCHLIGHT

Col. Ingersoll's Religion.

The following letter appeared in last Tuesday's Montreal Daily Star. The writer is the Rev R Hopkin, pastor of Westmount Congregational church, Montreal. The reverend gentleman is now in town and will occupy the Congregational church pulpit for one month, preaching the first sermon at 11 o'clock. The letter is as follows: To the Editor of the Star:

Sir,—In your account of the death of Col Ingersoll which appears in tonight's issue, you say his father was a Congregational minister of such broad views as to frequently cause dissension between himself and his parish.

I am not sure that this statement is correct.

If my memory serves me right I am sure I read in an article by Lady Henry Somerset (I think it was) on pietist influence, a statement to the effect that Ingersoll's father was a Calvinist of the narrowest type; so narrow was he, that his wife in a little while grew to abhor his creed and his God.

A few months before the birth of her son, Robt G, Mrs Ingersoll paid a prolonged visit to a relative who was a skeptic. Here, her broad free soul recoiling from the cramped and cruel conceptions of the Deity which her husband held, drank eagerly at the springs of skepticism which were everywhere to her hand in her relative's home; even after her return home she read with eagerness all the literature of a skeptical nature that she could get a hold of.

It was during this time that Robt. was born, and it is said that he grew up without even once exhibiting a single religious tendency.

Years ago, the writer of the article referred to says: Ingersoll stood in the presence of a cousin, a broad, free Christian woman and with tears in his eyes, expressed the wish that he had been nurtured in the same cradle of Christian truth as she, and that her faith might be his; but, said he, the thing is altogether impossible now, I cannot believe, even if I would.

Your statement Mr Editor, would lead men to believe that Ingersoll's father's "breadth" was responsible for his son's infidelity, while in reality it was his "narrowness"

It is not breadth of thought regarding God that kills the spirit life, it is that

narrow, materialistic thought, which cramps God into a certain shape and size, and space, that destroys spirituality and makes infidels of men.

Yours sincerely,

R. Hopkin.

Anonymous Letters.

We are quite sure that if the writer of the average anonymous letter were asked the question why he was anxious to conceal his identity, and were to reply with candour, he would say that he wished the onus of making the attack to fall on the newspaper that gave it publicity, and not on himself; and if he were asked to sign the missive, he would withdraw it with a suddenness truly instructive; or, if a signature were insisted on, he would so amend it as to strip it of much of the venom, with which it is usually saturated. A knowledge of the facts set forth has convinced us of the generally indefensible nature of the average anonymous letter, and of the necessity of guarding the public against putting faith in such communications. We find that the interest of the public is promoted rather than retarded by refusal to print any of these rib-stabbing attacks.—Orchardist.

Hit Him Again.

A small church in a rural district was sadly in need of repairs, and a meeting was held in it for that purpose. The minister having said five hundred dollars would be required, a very wealthy and equally stingy member of the church rose and said he would give one dollar. Just as he sat down however, a lump of plaster fell from the ceiling and hit him on the head, whereupon he rose up hastily and called out that he had made a mistake, he would give fifty dollars. This was too much for an enthusiastic member present, who forgetful of everything, called out fervently: "O Lord, hit him again!"

Who is He?

A "boom" town is always sure to attract merchants, and the fact that men commence to open up new stores in a place is one of the most important signs of "boom." That Sydney is in

this position now is evinced by the fact that a prominent Truro merchant is preparing to remove his business there.—Maritime Merchant.

Rev Wm Diken of Port Elgin, N B, was in town Monday and went to camp for a few days with the Y M C A boys at River John. Mr Diken is a general favorite with the boys.

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