INGERSOLL—"If consequences are good, so is the action."

COMMENT—According to this dictum, you cannot say a cold-blooded murder or an assassination is good or bad until you have learned the consequences of it. The consequences of Garfield's taking off can never be known to man. Then, according to your philosophy, it can never be known whether his murder was a crime or a virtue! Are you not afraid that your philosophy may put a bee into the head of some religious fanatic, who, misled by your teachings, might consider his killing of you a virtuous and holy act, foolishly imagining that the result of it might, in its consequences, prove beneficial to society and religion? I, as a Christian, condemn that act beforehand, as a crime deserving the eternal torments of hell; but you cannot consistently condemn it, because, according to your infidel theory, the act cannot be said to be evil or wicked till its consequences are known. As the consequences of your death cannot be known, it follows that your murder might be a good or bad act! This is the result or consequence of your philosophy. From a Christian point of view it is a very bad consequence, and therefore, if there is any virtue in logic, your philosophy is bad. The Christian holds not only that murder is a crime, but that even the intention, determination, or unactuated resolve is a crime, deserving of hell. It is thus that the Christian religion strikes at the very root of this murderous propensity in man, and kills the dragon before he issues from his innermost den in the human heart. The doctrine that acts take their nature and quality from their results is a logical and necessary consequence of the denial of God. It destroys individual responsibility and is subversive of all government and social order. It denies all appeal to right, and destroys not only *justice*, but the very idea of it. It contemplates nothing but results—physical, cognizable results.