

world," I agree with you. I really believe that among all the books that have ever been published since the invention of printing, there is not another containing so much of the impossible, the unreasonable, the incredible, the bloodthirsty, the cruel and the filthy, between its covers.

The Bible, you say, "has been refuted, demolished, overthrown and exploded more times than any other book you ever heard of."

I agree with you again, and only for the unblushing effrontery and unmitigated impudence of those interested in its maintenance, it would long ago have taken its place alongside the "Arabian Nights" and similar literature; but not until ignorance ceases to be the mother of devotion will it come to its proper level. Your similitude of the cube of granite is only useful to show that it is just as bad one side up as the other.

Next, you find occasion for a fling at Voltaire, and here you repeat a statement said to have been made by him, to the effect that in a hundred years from his time "Christianity will have been swept from existence and will have passed into history."

I thought I had read Voltaire pretty carefully, but somehow I must have contrived to miss this beautiful prophecy. If he ever expressed such an idea, it simply shows that he has a better claim to the title of "prophet" than any man mentioned in the Bible, Jesus Christ (be he God or man or both) included; for, since Voltaire's day, Christianity has in a great measure passed into history. It is absolutely certain that the religion of Jesus does not wield the same influence over men's minds to-day that it did 120 or even 60 years ago. Its flat earth is gone, its witchcraft is gone, the fires of hell are out, its devil is dead, and at every point where it has been confronted by the natural and physical sciences its fallacies have been exposed and seen in their true light. As Col. Ingersoll has well said, "Science has written over her high altars its 'Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin,' those old words destined to be the epitaph of all religions." "The Christendom of to-day is a valley of dry bones, a wilderness of unsightly weeds, a home made desolate by the strife of its denizens in the mad race for gold and power, and in the light of nineteenth century knowledge it stands aghast begging for its life."