

descent. The Greeks were intellectually the peers of the Romans, yet the latter had the stronger wills and the more vigorous vitality.

Modern progress also depends largely upon adaptability to new conditions. Those races and persons who insist upon retaining the ideas and institutions of the past can no more hope to hold their position against those of greater adaptability than can a person expect to protect himself from modern cannon with mediæval armor. We may rest assured that those who are most open to new ideas, and readiest in adopting new inventions and in setting aside faiths and formulas no longer adapted to progressive humanity, have the future for their own, and their species will, like a dominant organism, supplant and supersede inferior forms.—*Freethinker*.

SUPERSTITION.

BY COL. R. G. INGERSOLL.

I.

WHAT IS SUPERSTITION ?

SUPERSTITION is to believe in spite of, or without evidence.

To account for one mystery by another.

To believe that the world is governed by chance or caprice.

To disregard the true relation between cause and effect.

To put thought, intention and design back of Nature.

To believe that mind created and controls matter.

To believe in force apart from substance, or in substance apart from force.

To believe in miracles, spells and charms, in dreams and prophecies.

To believe in the supernatural.

The foundation of superstition is ignorance, the superstructure is faith, and the dome is a vain hope. Superstition is the child of ignorance and the mother of misery.

In nearly every brain is found some cloud of superstition.

A woman drops a cloth with which she is washing dishes, and she exclaims: "That means company."

Most people will admit that there is no possible connection between dropping the cloth and the coming of visitors. The falling cloth could not have put the visit desire in the minds of people not present, and how could the cloth produce the desire to visit the particular person who dropped it? There is no possible connection between the dropping of the cloth and the anticipated effects.

A man catches a glimpse of the new moon over his left shoulder, and he says: "This is bad luck."

To see the moon over the right or left shoulder, or not to see it, could not