

A D D R E S S

DELIVERED ON THE

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH-DAY

OF

T H O M A S P A I N E ,

IN THE MELODEON HALL,

Cincinnati, Ohio, January 29, 1859.

**PUBLISHED BY
THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE INFIDEL SOCIETY OF CINCINNATI, O.
1859.**

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A D D R E S S .

THE MAN whose birth-day we are met to celebrate, was no hereditary monarch, who wronged his subjects by virtue of a right divine, and built up the monument of his greatness on their degradation and ruin.

He was no soulless politician, who headed a lordly aristocracy with his talent, and upheld their selfish institutions by the power of his oratory, receiving in pay the money plundered from a starving people.

He was no oily-tongued priest, who, professing to be God's vicegerent, used his power to absolve high-handed crime, and taught to the spoiled and down-trodden the virtues of humility and patience. Had he been any one of these, as true men we should say, Let him rest in the grave which his infancy has dug, nor bring again to light the rotting fragments of his loathsome carcass.

Had he been a Patriot, who labored incessantly for the welfare of his brethren, his remembrance should this day be dear to us. Had he been an Author, whose thoughts at all times breathed the spirit of freedom, and that went forth like mailed warriors to fight against every form of oppression, and whose pen never wrote a venal line, we should regard him with veneration, and the halo of our love would encircle his name.

Had he been a reformer, who spent his strength in overturning the gigantic pyramids of wrong and in battling for the rights of man, then should we hallow his memory and send down to our children, and children's children, our estimation of his manliness and worth.

How much more then, when we remember that THOMAS PAINE was *all in one*. His was the Patriotism that never stumbled in the darkest night, that never faltered in the hottest fight, whose voice rang like an inspiring clarion,

and roused the sinking spirits of a nation to battle against the crowned tyrant who sought to chain them to his car. He was the Author whose wit charmed, whose originality, and clear common sense delighted, and whose grace of diction and transparency of principle recommended his writings to all who read with unprejudiced minds.

He also was the Reformer, who, in opposition to hydra-headed errors, backed by thrones, tiaras, mitres and swords, single-handed attacked them, and died like a hero, in the conflict. Died, did I say? No, he still lives; lives in the hearts of those who hear my voice to day; in the printed page now circulating by the million, as it once did by the thousand; he lives in the bright heaven which his manliness has raised him.

His life is familiar to most of you as a household word, and I therefore shall not occupy your time by attention to its details; but making texts of some of the more prominent features of his life and character, shall draw from them lessons, that I trust will be beneficial to us all.

First, then, Thomas Paine was a poor man. I am not one of those who regard poverty as the soil in which all virtues grow; for the extremes of poverty and wealth are alike unfavorable to the formation of nobility of character; and he who, in spite of them, rises to eminence intellectually or morally, gives evidence of the possession of great natural abilities. It is a remarkable fact, however, that our great reformers have been poor men. Rich men move with the crowd; they cannot afford to lose caste; the poor man, free to the impulse of truth, moves in obedience to her whispers; he has no caste to lose. Socrates, the reformer, was no millionaire.

Jesus, the Jewish reformer, had not where to lay his head; and Thomas Paine, the Christian reformer, because a reformer of Christians, says: "My parents were not able to give me a shilling beyond what they gave me in education; and to do this they distressed themselves." His goods were at one time sold to pay his debts; and Sherwin, speaking of this period of his life, says: "Borne down by poverty and surrounded by difficulties of every description, his condition appears to have been that of a

ruined, hopeless man." I question, however, about his being a *hopeless* man, he was of too sanguine a disposition for that; and in the midst of all these untoward circumstances he struggled nobly and came out more than a conqueror. Poverty froze not the genial current of his soul, but his struggles with it led him more deeply to sympathize with the down-trodden and poverty-stricken of every age and clime. Courage then, young reformer, you who find it difficult to obtain the mere necessities of existence; the noblest of men have trod the pathway on which you walk, and the light of their example beams brightly upon you.

He was a conscientious man. What he did he did from a sense of its rectitude, and not because it was fashionable or would bring him wealth or renown. Where would have been the "Age of Reason" had Paine been a hypocrite? The talent possessed by him, if employed to build up priestcraft and prop the rotten structure of superstition, would have brought him the smiles of men and the love of women, and smoothed his way to honor and preferment; but, deaf to the song of the siren, he listened to the voice within and obeyed its requirements at all hazards. In the first number of the *Crisis* he says: "I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death." Just such a man was he, and he was but drawing with his pen the reflection of his own noble soul. 'Tis this quality in a man that makes a hero, who marches into the "purple heart of hell," if right points out the way. For want of it, men are cowardly and mean. What matters it if the king call you brother, and all the world throw up their caps and cry, well done; if your soul smites you on the cheek and writes villain in burning letters on your brain? There is then no rest by day or night; contentment flees away, and despair broods over the desolate soul. But how sweetly sleeps the man who is at peace with himself, whose conscience whispers, all is well. Wealth may frown indignantly, priestcraft may thunder its anathemas, slander may shoot her poisoned arrows, and the dungeon

open its stony jaws to devour him, but in the midst of all he is calm and fearless; his heart is firm, and, like the oak he gathers strength from the rockings of the tempest. Such a man was Thomas Paine.

The words of an honest man stir the pulses of the people; they come from the heart and they reach the heart. Hence the power of Thomas Paine's writings; thoroughly honest, he influenced all who read with the justice of the cause that he espoused and so eloquently advocated; and all that error could do was to calumniate his character, and thus prevent the world from reading the writings of one of the bravest, because one of the most honest, of its heroes.

There are men who cannot by any possibility be hypocrites: there is no stuff in them of which one can be made. It was so with Paine; he had no power to be a hypocrite, had the wish been there; his pen was true to his thought; and every line he wrote, bears the stamp of honesty and the singular transparency of his soul.

He was a benevolent man, and his benevolence was wide as the world; bounded by no state or party lines, by no political or religious creed. Beautiful is benevolence in man, as a rainbow girdling the summer sky, cheering as the warm sunbeam in spring. It is an angel in a man's soul that brings with it the blessing of heaven. That angel dwelt in the heart of Thomas Paine, and made it her constant home. The first object of his life seems to have been the happiness of mankind; and from this purpose, censures, reproaches and calumnies could not divert him; in the face of all he pursued the even tenor of his way. He says in his *Rights of Man*, Part 2, "I did not at my first setting out in public life nearly 17 years ago, turn my thoughts to subjects of government from motives of interest—and my conduct from that moment to this proves the fact. I saw an opportunity in which I thought I could do some good, and I followed exactly what my heart dictated;" and every one, thoroughly acquainted with his history, must know that his statement is true. When his pamphlet, entitled *Common Sense*, was published, the demand for it was enormous. "Now," an ordinary man would have said to himself, "now is the time for me to make something that shall recompense me

for all my struggles and sacrifices in the cause of freedom;" nor could any one have blamed him for so doing; but he, nobly and generously, gave a copy-right to every State in the Union, preferring the satisfaction arising from doing good, to the money which he might have honestly obtained. Self-interest appears to have been the last thought in his actions; he magnanimously gave his writings, free as the rain of heaven, for the benefit of mankind.

In the year 1780, when gloom hung over this nation, and the fates seemed to be leagued against the liberty of America; when the friends of freedom faltered and the foremost looked back, for a time; when Washington himself dreaded a general mutiny, for the "sinews of war" were weak and the soldiers dissatisfied; then, Thomas Paine commenced a subscription for the relief of the army, by giving the whole of his salary, as clerk of the assembly, for one year, for this purpose. The sum thus subscribed by him formed the nucleus of \$1,500,000, which was raised by private subscription, and which enabled Washington to make the necessary preparations to subdue Cornwallis, and thus bring the war to an end.

His conduct after peace was declared, and prosperity shone upon our land, was in agreement with the disinterestedness that characterized him. Mr. Sherwin, one of his biographers, says: "Mr. Paine was urged by several of his friends to make an application to Congress for a compensation for his revolutionary writings, but this he uniformly refused to do. That the man who had been the means of first moving the country to a declaration of independence, and whose writings had afterward very materially contributed to the attainment of the object, was deserving of remuneration, no one could deny; but Mr. Paine's services in this respect being entirely of a voluntary nature, he could not consent to petition the Congress for a pecuniary recompense. His writings, however meritorious and serviceable they might have been, (and the most illiberal of his calumniators do not deny that their effects were great and universal,) were dictated by the pure principles of disinterested patriotism, and he could not degrade their character by converting them into a medium of sordid emolument."

He was especially the friend of the poor. For them he made his books cheap, for their cause he pleaded in the Rights of Man, and especially in his Agrarian Justice, which advocates the cause of the poor and landless against the rich and aristocratic. In it you will find what are now axioms to the Land Reformer; it calls aloud for justice for those whose voice could not be heard. "It is wrong," says he, "to say that God made *rich* and *poor*: he made only *male* and *female*, and he gave them the earth for their inheritance." Again he says: "There could be no such thing as landed property originally. Man did not make the earth, and, though he had a natural right to *occupy* it, he had no right to *locate* as *his property* in perpetuity any part of it: neither did the Creator of the earth open a land office, from whence the first title-deeds should issue." Hence he argues that those who possessed the land ought to do something toward the maintenance of those who unfortunately had none; and as soon as this act of justice was commenced he offered to give a thousand dollars towards it out of the little property that he possessed.

Such was the benevolence of this "miserable infidel!" such his love for those from whom he could expect nothing, for whose benefit he incurred the displeasure of the rich and proud. Well would it be if the pious who belie him would imitate his virtues, and those leeches who hang around the capitol, as long as there is a chance of drawing a drop from the public purse, might learn a lesson of manliness from the much abused and shamefully traduced Thomas Paine.

He was bold and fearless; a true hero in life's battle. No skulker, who wished the truth to conquer, but took good care to keep far enough from the field, that no shot should hit him. He was at all times the leader of the "forlorn hope," and never shrank from attacking the strongest citadel of the enemy. I honor not the rashness that blindly rushes into danger, regardless of safety, and with but little prospect of success; but I do admire the manly courage, tempered by wisdom, that dares to combat error though seated on a throne, with weapons that are certain in the end to bring the victory.

That man may be called bold that marches to the can-

non's mouth and faces the gleaming bayonet; but what is his momentary courage, bolstered by his surrounding comrades, compared with that of the man who singly attacks a giant, fashionable wrong, well knowing that he must be for years, or even for life, the target for all the arrows that malice can shoot. This was the courage that Paine possessed. His Common Sense doomed him, had Britain been victorious in the revolutionary conflict, to the death of a traitor. His Rights of Man was written in defiance of the crown and its pampered, aristocratic minions, at a time when plain talk about kings was treason; and his Age of Reason, written with death staring him in the face, was the boldest production that ever came from the pen of man; attacking as it did the citadel of a nation's prejudices, and showing the rottenness of the foundation in which men build their hopes of happiness here and glory hereafter. There was nothing of fool-hardiness in this, but a conscientious discharge of duty, though death and hell stood in the way. It is true that in the days of Thomas Paine there was but little danger of the fagot or gibbet for the heretic; but, who does not know that there are fires that burn more fiercely than those of Smithfield; and gibbets that hang up a heretic higher than the wooden ones of our forefathers? There are soul-screws more torturing than the thumb-screws of the Spanish Inquisition; and there were in his time, as there are now, plenty to use them. All this he knew, but attacked the popular idol notwithstanding. There stood the Bible, like a grim moloch on the plain; and there too, attending upon it continually, thousands of priests, who cried day and night, Great is the Bible, for God made it; bow down to it, all lands and worship it all people, for those who refuse shall be cast into a furnace of fire where there is weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth! Before it knelt the millions in humble adoration, offering to this idol, time, talents, money, and even reason, a sacrifice to the monster. Paine stood and saw, and seeing deplored; his manly soul was stirred within him; he attacked the idol and showed its hideous deformity to its blinded worshippers.

Honor to the man who in an age of cowards dared to be bold, and in time of idolatry led men back to reason and truth.

He was a free man and a lover of freedom, and hated intensely tyranny of every kind. This characteristic shines in all his writings, for its spirit animated him in all his endeavors. What is nobler than a free man asserting his individuality and independence, and risking all to maintain them? If, as the poet says,

They are free, who dare to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are free, who rather choose
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
Than they would in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are free, who dare to be
In the right with two or three;

then was Thomas Paine emphatically a free man. None were too poor or weak for him to labor in their behalf. For the slave, with Franklin, he helped to form an abolition society, and for bondmen every where he labored throughout his useful life. He shrank from the utterance of no truth, that he deemed it well for man to know, and dared to be in the right though all alone.

I pity a slave; be his master a pipe or a pope, a king or a conference; and I know I love a free man who dares to think and investigate all subjects, from the Gods in the highest heavens to the Devils in the lowest hells, and then utter his thought, hit whom it may. There is nothing on earth more saddening than the sight of a slave, more cheering, than the contemplation of such a free man; society, instead of abusing such men, should honor them as the noblest of the race. Where would have been your Christianity, good church-goers, had Jesus been as cowardly as you? Where would have been your religion, had his disciples been as silent as you wish those you call Infidels to be? Where would have been our Astronomy, and Geology, and kindred sciences, if the discoverers of their mighty truths had been dumb because society was not prepared for them? We should have been groping in an unstarred mediæval night, and praying to deaf gods for the dawn of a better day. Thanks to the men, then, who, seeing the truth, freely expressed it; for they brought the dawn of the day in which we live. Had not Paine, Volney, Hume, Tay-

lor, Owen and others, fought the battle before our time, then must we have borne the brunt as they did. They battled for us, and it is but fair that we do justice to their names.

Paine took the widest liberty of religious thought and expression ; and what he took he was equally willing to give. He had no pill, in the shape of a creed, that every one must swallow, to save his poor soul. In his letter to Samuel Adams he says: "The key of heaven is not in the keeping of any sect, nor ought the road to it be obstructed by any. Our relation to each other in this world is as men, and the man who is a friend to man and to his rights, let his religious opinions be what they may, is a good citizen, to whom I can give, as I ought to do, and as every other person ought, the right hand of fellowship."

In the first part of the "Rights of Man," in reply to Burke, he shows the absurdity of what is called toleration ; for what was the utmost bound of another's liberality was but the starting place of his. "Toleration and intoleration are both despotisms ; the one assumes to itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience, and the other of granting it. The one is the Pope armed with fire and faggot, and the other is the Pope selling or granting indulgences." Again, he says, "Who, then, art thou, vain dust and ashes ? By whatever name thou art called, whether a king, a bishop, a church, or a state, a parliament or anything else, that obtrudest thine insignificance between the soul of man and his Maker ! Mind thine own concerns. If he believest not as thou believest, it is a proof that thou believest not as he believest, and there is no earthly power can determine between you." Let me see as much liberality as this among Christians, and I shall have more faith in their religion than I have had for years.

Time would fail me to recount his virtues, for they were many, and his noble deeds, for his life was composed of them. As a Patriot, he was circumscribed by no river, boundary, or mountain chain. There was no Know-Nothing fence between him and the people that needed his help. - In the words of Arndt :

"That was his land, the land of lands,
Where vows bind less than clasped hands ;

Where valor lights the flashing eye,
Where love and truth in deep hearts lie,
And zeal enkindles freedom's brand—
That was our hero's father land."

"My country," says he, "is the world; and my religion is to do good." Nobler sentiments were never expressed by man. Where his brethren were fighting the battle of Right against Might, there was he in the hottest of the fight. Where the bondman rose to break the yoke of the oppressor, there was he with a stout arm, aiding and strengthening them. America called; and, though far away, his was the ear that heard, the heart that felt. His was the voice that spoke in tones of thunder, and startled a sleeping nation into life. When America had achieved her independence, far above the roar of the Atlantic waves, rose the voice of France—priest-ridden, king-ridden, aristocracy-cursed France. No sooner did that cry reach his ears, than France was his home—his father-land—and he was ready to battle to the death for her also. And when the strong walls of a dungeon encompassed him, as a reward for his manliness, even then, his last hours, as he supposed, were spent in writing for the benefit of mankind. Compare him with Demosthenes, who saw no virtue outside of Athens, who felt no sympathy with manhood beyond the bounds of Greece. Compare him with your Bible heroes, Christians—his patriotism, with the narrow views of a Moses, David and Solomon. Compare him with Jesus, who called the Gentiles dogs, and forbid his disciples visiting them; and he stands, like Saul, head and shoulders above them all.

As an author, his thoughts are clear as the mountain brook, at whose bottom you see the shining pebbles; and they are expressed as clearly in words that seem to have been made for his very use. In wandering with him you never find yourself in a fog; the sky is clear above you and the way plain before you. He treats every one he meets as a human being, and the accidents of place and power go for nothing. The king and the priest are no more than the cottager and the pauper; he meets out justice to all. His thoughts are never loose and soft like cotton wads, that can do no execution, but are packed as

hard as cannon balls, and woe to whatever stands before them.

As a reformer, both political and religious, he was zealous, thorough, and disinterested; he was a *radical* reformer, for he went to the root. He was no quack, administering nostrums to the poor patient, intended to remove the symptoms, while the cause remained untouched. His eagle glance perceived in a moment where the cause of the evil lurked, and he fearlessly applied the true remedy. At that glance, kings trembled on their thrones, and corrupt priests on their sanctuaries; for these canker worms of the world knew that the hour of their doom was come. He never waited to see whether a reform was likely to be fashionable or not before he undertook its advocacy. Is it true? Is it calculated to benefit mankind? These were the questions he asked, and when they were answered in the affirmative, his course was taken, come weal, come woe. He was well calculated for the work; from the people, he knew how to write so as to reach them; and no man ever succeeded better.

I am told that "Tom Paine," as Christian blackguards have entitled him, was a miserable infidel; and this, in their estimation, is sufficient to shut him out of the pale of society, in this world, and heaven in the next.

I reply in his own words, "Infidelity does not consist in believing or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe." Making this the text, there never was a man farther from infidelity than Paine; there was nothing that he so much despised.—"It is impossible," says he, "to calculate the moral mischief, if I may so express it, that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime." Again, in his reply to Mr. Erskine, who was the Crown Counsel for prosecuting the bookseller who sold the "Age of Reason,"—"Mr. Erskine is very little acquainted with theological subjects, if he does not know there is such a thing as a *sincere* and *religious* belief that the Bible is not the word of God. This is my belief; it is the belief of thousands far more learned than Mr.

Erskine ; and it is a belief that is every day increasing. It is not infidelity, as Mr. Erskine profanely and abusively calls it—it is the direct reverse of infidelity." His liberality proves him to have had faith in his principles. A bigot, who is an infidel at heart, must persecute, for he has not faith in the ultimate triumph of truth without an arm of force to help her ; and you may always measure the amount of a man's infidelity, by the strength of the disposition he manifests to persecute those who differ from him. Those who are generally styled infidels are ready to say with Paine—"An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot ; it will succeed where diplomatic management would fail ; it is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the Ocean, that can arrest its progress ; it will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer."

"Such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing !"

Paine was no infidel ; had he been, he would have bowed to the Bible, sailed with the tide, and received the blessings of those very priests who now curse him for his fidelity to truth, which they baptize infidelity. The cowardly historians who have been studiously silent with regard to his noble deeds would have trumpeted them forth to the world, and Christianity would have enrolled among her heroes the *pious*, and the immortal Thomas Paine.

If, by an infidel, you mean one who is too sensible to swallow Jewish fables for everlasting truths ; one who looks at the Bible, as he would the book of Mormon, and gives it credit for no more than it is worth ; one who exposes error wherever he finds it, though it comes in the name of Jehovah, with red lightning in its hand, to strike the man who opposes its pretences ; if this you call infidelity, then, I reply, his infidelity was the brightest gem in his crown, as it would be in yours if you were king enough to wear one.

To him the Jewish God was a bloody monster, as unworthy of worship as the Juggernaut of India. He was unable as he was unwilling to conceal his detestation of the atrocious crimes committed under His sanction, and was desirous of delivering men from a religion whose

teachings shook even the reason of a Hottentot; a religion which makes God an infinite tyrant, and man a base-born slave, or a crawling worm. It was especially from its evil influence on man that he objected to it; and hence his Age of Reason. Hear it: "It is by man's being taught to contemplate himself as an out-law, as an out-cast, as a beggar, as a mumper; as one thrown, as it were, on a dunghill, at an immense distance from his Creator, and who must make his approaches creeping and cringing to intermediate beings—that he conceives either a contemptuous disregard for everything under the name of religion, or becomes indifferent, or turns, what he calls, devout. In the latter case, he consumes his life in grief, or the affectation of it; his prayers are reproaches; his humility is ingratitude; he calls himself a worm; and the fertile earth a dunghill; and all the blessings of life, by the thankless name of vanities; he despises the choicest gift of God to man—the GIFT OF REASON; and having endeavored to force upon himself the belief of a system, against which reason revolts, he ungratefully calls it *human reason*, as if man could give reason to himself." The reason why he opposed the errors of the Bible and religion, then, was because they were opposed to the well-being of man.

Some say he might have exposed these errors in a more gentle and conciliatory manner. True, some might have done so, but it was not for him; as he saw, he wrote, and gave his thoughts to others, as forcibly as they presented themselves to him. Priests had dressed up their image in the richest and most decorative garb; they had hung around it all the jewels that art could produce; all that Paine did was to strip it, and expose its hidden deformity; but, of course, the rage of the men who lived by its worship knew no bounds. But, as is their hatred, so should be our gratitude and love.

I rejoice that such a man as Paine ever lived and wrote; and that, where there was one sixty years ago, there are a hundred now. Infidelity, instead of becoming a term of reproach, is fast becoming honorable. Men are now ashamed to own that the Bible, the offspring of ignorance, is the man of their counsel, and women to acknowledge that its filthy pages are their "delight by day and night."

But I am told that Thomas Paine was a wretched drunkard: That he drank a little, as was the custom of his day, there is no doubt; but that he was ever a drunkard we have the best of reason to believe utterly false. Chatham, a political as well as religious opponent of his, was the first to circulate this slander; and orthodoxy, ever ready to believe that infidels are bad men, has reiterated this statement thousands of times until multitudes have been led to believe it must have been so. But Chatham's own friends and referees, acknowledge that he was a deliberate falsifier, and an unprincipled man; while the persons with whom Paine lived at various times, not only represent him as being sober, but actually abstemious, in reference to intoxicating drinks. In writing to Samuel Adams, he speaks of himself as follows:—"I have yet, I believe, some years in store, for I have a good state of health and a happy mind; I take care of both, by nourishing the first with temperance, and the latter with abundance. This, I believe, you will allow to be the true philosophy of life." The letter from which this is an extract was written when he was sixty-six years of age, and published by him in the *National Intelligencer* of Washington City. Is this the language of a drunkard? The fact is, had Paine been orthodox, no such stories had ever been heard. But it was necessary for Christians, unable to answer his arguments, to belie his character and bring an evil report upon the man, in order to counteract the effect of his principles.

The most malicious slander, however, that has been circulated with regard to him is to the effect that he became, upon his death-bed, converted to Christianity, lamented that his religious works had not been burned, and, as I have heard it stated from orthodox pulpits many a time, died, calling on God and Jesus to have mercy upon his soul. Oh, orthodoxy! When wilt thou cease to lie for the glory of God and the good of souls? Thomas Paine is not the only Free-thinker who has been thus belied, and it may be well to examine these death-bed stories. If true, what would they amount to? Can the way in which a man dies affect the truth of the principles that he taught? No more than the death of a mason would affect the stability of the mansion that he

built. Try Christianity by this rule; and what becomes of it! The dying words of its very founder were, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" Forsaken of God and cursed by man, in anguish of soul he breathed his last. What says Theodore Clapp, in his auto-biography, and he a Congregational Christian minister? "In all my experience, I never saw an unbeliever die in fear. I have seen them expire, of course, without any hope or expectation, but never in agitation from dread or misgivings as to what might befall them hereafter. * * * It is probable that I have seen a greater number of those called irreligious persons breathe their last than other clergyman in the United States. In all my experience, I have met with no dying persons who were terrified except church members who had been brought up in the trinitarian faith. When I first entered the clerical profession, I was struck with the utter insufficiency of most forms of Christianity to afford consolation in a dying hour."

After all the stories we have heard of infidels dying miserable, and Christians triumphantly, it appears from the testimony of Christians themselves, that Christians are the ones who die in terror, and unbelievers in peace, and it is what we should reasonably expect. Christians believe in an angry God, in a burning hell, and a torturing devil, and they are in doubt and fear continually; no wonder then that they die miserable; and unbelievers, having none of these things to torture them, the greatest sceptics believing but in everlasting sleep, it is not surprising that they can lie down and rest in peace.

It would have been strange if Thomas Paine had been an exception to this. It is true he did believe in future life, but this, instead of adding to the terror of dying, would have been much more likely to have a contrary effect, for with his belief he was going to be happy hereafter. "My own opinion is," says he, in his *Private Thoughts of a Future State*, written just before his death, "that those whose lives have been spent in doing good, and endeavoring to make their fellow-mortals happy,—for this is the only way in which we can serve God,—*will be happy hereafter.*" There could then be no possible cause of uneasiness to him, for this had been the grand business of his life.

He had previously stared death in the face, and it had no terrors for him. When writing the first part of the *Age of Reason*, he was confined in the Bastile. "I saw my life," says he, "in continual danger. My friends were falling as fast as the guillotine could cut their heads off, and as I expected every day the same fate, I resolved to begin my work. I appeared to myself to be on my death-bed, for death was on every side of me, and I had no time to lose."

Not only is all probability violated in supposing that Paine died as orthodoxy represents, but the facts respecting his death give the absolute lie to this trumpery story. Living witnesses, some of whom visited him every day for weeks before his death, and saw him draw his last breath, declare that there was no change in his sentiments; and that his last words were, in reply to the foolish question of Dr. Manley, "Do you wish to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," "I have no wish to believe on that subject." He died then, as he had lived, in the belief of one God and in the hope of a life of happiness beyond the grave.

I have no belief, however, in *perfect* men. From Job to Jesus, and from Jesus to Joseph Smith, men are all subject to human frailties; and of none can we say truly, he is without fault. So with Thomas Paine; we claim for him no infallibility; we have no disposition to make him a Pope, or Jesus of a new dispensation; this much, however, we can say for him, that no man ever occupied as public a position as his, and made as deep a mark upon the world, who had fewer faults, and whose very failings leaned more to virtue's side.

He was sanguine to a fault. "I do not believe," says he, in his preface to the second part of *Rights of Man*, "that monarchy and aristocracy will continue seven years longer in any of the enlightened countries of Europe." He seems to have supposed that the reign of orthodoxy would be equally short; and he was doomed in consequence to bitter disappointment. He saw with joy the frost break up, the rivers flow, and the old icebergs float away, and his sanguine disposition led him to believe that Spring was here and Summer nigh; and no wonder that he felt sad, when he found it but a Janu-

ary thaw, and winter reigning in its rigor once more. He merely erred with regard to the time, however, for the day shall dawn when monarchy, aristocracy, and orthodoxy, most cursed trinity, shall perish, and the bondmen of the world shall stand upright and free. When that time comes, then the world will do justice to its true heroes; history will be re-written by men unbiassed by religious prejudices, and unawed by sectarian intolerance; and Thomas Paine will receive the fame to which he is so justly entitled, and of which religious bigotry has robbed him; for though

“The man is thought a fool or knave
Or bigot plotting crime,
Who, for the advancement of his age,
Is wiser than his time.

For him the hemlock is distilled,
For him the axe is bared;
For him the gibbet high is built,
For him the stake prepared.

Though him the scorn and wrath of men
Pursue with deadly aim—
And malice, envy, spite and lies,
May desecrate his name;

Yet truth shall conquer at the last,
For round and round we run;
And ever the right comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done.”

This prophecy is signally fulfilling in reference to Thomas Paine. The presence of this large and intelligent audience here tonight, is a sure indication of it—an index pointing to the glorious future in which justice shall be done. I see the dawn before me of a glorious day; already its golden ring encircles the eastern sky. That day, in its unclouded radiance, comes; and as the sun looks down upon the world in all his ample round, he finds no king, for kingcraft is no more. No priest, with impious cant, pretends to be the favorite of God; for priestcraft, too, is dead, and science reigns o'er all supreme.

Superstition, intemperance, slavery and war, those vampires, that have drained humanity's blood for ages, clap their wings and flee away; and peace and joy, sweet

angels, spread their bright wings o'er the world. The heavens open wide above, and there stands the noble form of Washington, and by his side are Franklin, Jefferson and Paine. They look upon the scene with blinding tears of joy; and earth rings with plaudits to the men who aided so nobly in achieving political, and religious independence.

Till that day shines in its meridian splendor, brothers, let us watch and work.

RESOLUTIONS AND SENTIMENTS.

The annexed compound of resolutions and toasts received the assent of the Society, viz:—

The Memory of Thomas Paine—The statesman, philosopher, and hero-author, whose “pen, mightier than the sword,” excited that electric fire of National Independence and American Liberty, which has become the bright promise of universal emancipation. For his unequalled services in the great struggle of the American Revolution, he is deserving of national honors and the universal gratitude of mankind. On the one hundred and twenty-second anniversary of his birth-day, we meet to honor his memory, to vindicate his character and reputation from slander and unceasing falsehoods of the priests and clergy, and to do homage to those grand principles of political and religious freedom of which their intolerance and persecution has aided to make him the great representative.

The Memory of Robert Owen—The philanthropist, the untiring friend and patron of popular education, the devoted social reformer, whose noble life and princely fortune were consecrated to, and spent in the service of mankind; whose cosmopolitan benevolence, too universal and comprehensive to be religious or sectarian, embraced within his generous heart the whole human race; whose unsurpassed exertions to do good were limited only by his power to do more. Had his means or abilities been equal to his wishes, there would have been neither pain nor poverty, nor wrong in the world, and the golden age of humanity would have been inaugurated. Opposed to all religion as founded on error, yet commanding universal respect by the purity and simplicity of his character, and his sincere, life-long devotion to the promotion of human goodness and happiness, let his unsullied fame be cherished throughout all future ages.

All hail to the memory of Jefferson, Franklin, Washington, Adams, Madison, and the glorious galaxy of

immortal men who founded a State free from the power of King or the office of Priest; and who formed the great charter of American Liberty, protecting alike men of all creeds and men of no creeds.

To the immortal dead of every clime and age, who have labored to enlighten and free mankind from the tyranny of kings, the oppression of aristocrats, and the crafty domination of Priests!

The Orthodox Clergy—Let them take note that revivals in religion, and revivals in crime; that revivals in the church and revivals in the slave trade go hand in hand.

The Heretic Clergy—Parker, Emerson, Conway, Chapin, Beecher, and all who love man above all creeds and sects and rituals and observances, who regard man as the highest and holiest and most sacred of all in the universe—may their motto be ever onward, greater freedom and clearer light.

Resolved, That we, the friends of free inquiry in Cincinnati, declare our determination never to cease our efforts to rescue the character of Thomas Paine from the misrepresentations and calumny which have been heaped upon it by the pious fraud of the religious parties