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Infidels Should Avow Their Sentiments

Dyer D. Lum

1857

Will the time ever arrive when Infidels will freely avow their sentiments?—when all who doubt of the inspiration of the Bible will stand boldly forward and say, “I am an Infidel?” We know that there are hundreds, aye, thousands who frequent Reason’s sepulchre every Sabbath and partake of the “Lord’s supper,” who entertain sceptical views of inspiration. Why is it that Infidels do not openly avow their unbelief?

These are questions that should be carefully considered. I contend that the blame rests on avowed Infidels. It is because they do not take a firmer stand against Christianity. But few, even among Infidels, have dared to face public opinion. As long as the Infidels of the present day follow the examples of Voltaire, Gibbon, Paine, and others, few will acknowledge their unbelief. Nearly, if not all of the Infidels of England, from Herbert to Gibbon, have called Christianity a pure, benevolent, and universal system of ethics, adapted to every duty and condition of life! Voltaire, when writing against it, does it in an underhand manner, and extols its influence on society. Thomas Paine calls Jesus a virtuous and an amiable

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man. Robert Dale Owen styles him a benefactor of his race. So I might go on and give similar extracts from the writings of seven-eighths of all infidels. If we would draw these secret Sceptics to open Infidelity, we must cease to praise the system to which they belong.

We must take the ground of a Carlile, a Taylor, and a Kneeland, and adopt their manner of writing. Call Christianity by its right name—a relic of heathen idolatry and superstition; give no quarter, seek its extinction, and free the human mind from its thralldom to the base superstition of a wandering and sanguinary tribe of Bedouin Arabs, whose only delight la in slaughter and rapine. Let us call ourselves Infidels or Atheists, and throw aside those cringing titles, unbelievers, Sceptics, Liberals, Socialists, Secularists, &c. Let us remedy this and speak of Christianity and its Deity as we do of the idolatry of ancient Greece and Rome and modern Pagans. Destroy this absurd reverence for “things spiritual.” Robert Taylor’s sermon on the “Unjust Judge,” contained in his “Devil’s Pulpit,” should be printed in tract form and distributed throughout the country. It would do much towards destroying this blind submission to “the greatest curse that ever befell the human race.” (Taylor.)

“Earth groans beneath religion’s iron age,
And priests dare babble of a God of peace,
Even whilst their hands are red with guiltless
blood,
Murdering the while, uprooting every germ
Of truth, exterminating, spoiling all,
Making the earth a slaughter-house.”—[Shelley.