

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

INGERSOLL'S TILT WITH TALMAGE.

The Answer of
ROBT. G. INGERSOLL

TO A SERMON PREACHED

BY THE

REV. DE WITT TALMAGE,

FROM THE TEXT :

“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.”

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Mr. Ingersoll's Answer to a Sermon by the Rev. De Witt Talmage, preached from the text :

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

THE text taken by the reverend gentleman is an insult, and was intended as such. Mr. Talmage seeks to apply this text to any one who denies that the Jehovah of the Jews was and is the infinite and eternal Creator of all. He is perfectly satisfied that any man who differs from him on this question is a "fool," and he has the Christian forbearance and kindness to say so. I presume he is honest in this opinion, and no doubt regards Bruno, Spinoza, and Humboldt as idiots. He entertains the same opinion of some of the greatest, wisest, and best of Greece and Rome. No man is fitted to reason upon this question who has not the intelligence to see the difficulties in all theories. No man has yet evolved a theory that satisfactorily accounts for all that is. No matter what his opinion may be, he is beset by a thousand difficulties, and innumerable things insist upon an explanation. The best that any man can do is to take that theory which to his mind presents the fewest difficulties. Mr. Talmage has been educated in a certain way—has a brain of a certain quantity, quality, and form—and accepts, in spite, it may be, of himself, a certain theory. Others, formed differently, having lived under different circumstances, cannot accept the Talmagian view, and thereupon he denounces them as fools.

Mr. Talmage insists that it takes no especial brain to reason out a "design" in Nature, and in a moment afterward says that "when the world slew Jesus, it showed what it would do with the eternal God, if once it could get its hands on Him."

Why should a God of infinite wisdom create people who would gladly murder their Creator? Was there any particular "design" in that? Does the existence of such people conclusively prove the existence of a good Designer? It seems to me—and I take it that my thought is natural, as I have only been born once—that an infinitely wise and good God would naturally create good people, and if He has not, certainly the fault is His. The God of Mr. Talmage knew, when He created Guiteau, that he would assassinate Garfield. Why did He create him? Did He want Garfield assassinated? Will somebody be kind enough to show the "design" in this transaction? Is it possible to see "design" in earthquakes, in volcanoes, in pestilence, in famine, in ruthless and relentless war? Can we find design in the fact that every animal lives upon some other—that every drop of every sea is a battlefield where the strong devour the weak? Over the precipice of cruelty rolls a perpetual Niagara of blood. Is there design in this? Why should a good God people a world with men capable of burning their fellow men—and capable of burning the greatest and best? Why does a good God permit these things? It is said of Christ that He was infinitely kind and generous, infinitely merciful, because when on earth He cured the sick, the lame, and blind. Has He not as much power now as He had then? If He was and is the God of all worlds, why does He not now give back to the widow her son? Why does He withhold light from the eyes of the blind? And why does One who had the power miraculously to feed thousands, allow millions to die for want of food? Did Christ only have pity when He was part human? Are we indebted for His kindness to the flesh that clothed His Spirit? Where is He now? Where has He been through all the centuries of slavery and crime? If this universe was designed, then all that happens was designed. If a man constructs an engine the boiler of which explodes, we say either that he did not know the strength of his materials, or that he was reckless of human life. If an infinite being should construct a weak or imperfect machine, he must be held accountable for all that happens. He cannot be permitted to say that he did not know the strength of the materials. He is

directly and absolutely responsible. So, if this world was designed by a being of infinite power and wisdom, he is responsible for the result of that design.

My position is this: I do not know. But there are so many objections to the personal God theory that it is impossible for me to accept it. I prefer to say that the universe is all the God there is. I prefer to make no being responsible. I prefer to say: If the naked are clothed, man must clothe them; if the hungry are fed, man must feed them. I prefer to rely upon human endeavour, upon human intelligence, upon the heart and brain of man. There is no evidence that God has ever interfered in the affairs of man. The hand of earth is stretched uselessly toward heaven. From the clouds there comes no help. In vain the shipwrecked cry to God. In vain the imprisoned ask for release—the world moves on, and the heavens are deaf and dumb and blind. The frost freezes, the fire burns, slander smites, the wrong triumphs, the good suffer, and prayer dies upon the lips of faith.

My creed is this:

1. Happiness is the only good.
 2. The way to be happy is to make others happy. Other things being equal, that man is happiest who is the nearest just, who is truthful, merciful, and intelligent.
 3. The time to be happy is now, and the place to be happy is here.
 4. Reason is the lamp of the mind, the only torch of progress; and instead of blowing that out and depending upon darkness and dogma, it is far better to increase the sacred light.
 5. Every man should be the intellectual proprietor of himself—honest with himself and intellectually hospitable—and upon every brain reason should be enthroned as king.
 6. That every man must bear the consequences, at least, of his own actions; that if he puts his hands in the fire, his hands must smart, and not the hands of another. In other words, that each man must eat the fruit of the tree he plants.
- Mr. Talmage charges me with blasphemy. This is an epithet bestowed by superstition upon common sense.

Whoever investigates a religion as he would any department of science, is called a blasphemer. Whoever contradicts a priest, whoever has the impudence to use his own reason, whoever is brave enough to express his honest thought, is a blasphemer in the eyes of the religionist. When a missionary speaks slightingly of the wooden god of a savage, the savage regards him as a blasphemer. To laugh at the pretensions of Mohammed in Constantinople is blasphemy. To say in St. Petersburg that Mohammed was a prophet of God is also blasphemy. There was a time when to acknowledge the divinity of Christ was blasphemy in Jerusalem. To deny His divinity is now blasphemy in New York. Blasphemy is to a considerable extent a geographical question. It depends not only on what you say, but where you are when you say it. Blasphemy is what the old calls the new.

The founder of every religion was a blasphemer. The Jews regarded Christ as a blasphemer. The Athenians had the same opinion of Socrates. The Catholics have always looked upon the Protestants as blasphemers, and the Protestants have always held the same generous opinion of the Catholics. To deny that Mary is the Mother of God is blasphemy. To say that she is the Mother of God is blasphemy. Some savages think that a dried snake skin stuffed with leaves is sacred and he who thinks otherwise is a blasphemer. It was once blasphemy to laugh at Diana of the Ephesians. Many people think that it is blasphemous to tell your real opinion of the Jewish Jehovah. Others imagine that words can be printed upon paper, and the paper bound into a book covered with sheepskin, and that the book is sacred, and that to question its sacredness is blasphemy. Blasphemy is also a crime against God, and yet nothing can be more absurd than a crime against God. If God is infinite you cannot injure Him. You cannot commit a crime against any being that you cannot injure. Of course, the infinite cannot be injured. Man is a conditioned being. By changing his conditions, his surroundings, you can injure him, but if God is infinite, he is conditionless. If he is conditionless, he cannot by any possibility be injured. You can neither increase nor decrease the well-being of the infinite.

Consequently, a crime against God is a demonstrated impossibility. The cry of blasphemy means only that the argument of the blasphemer cannot be answered. The sleight of hand performer, when some one tries to raise the curtain behind which he operates, cries "blasphemer!" The priest, finding that he has been attacked by common sense, by a fact, resorts to the same cry. Blasphemy is the black flag of theology, and it means no argument and no quarter! It is an appeal to prejudices, to passions and ignorance. It is the last resort of a defeated priest. Blasphemy marks the point where argument stops and slander begins. In old times it was the signal for throwing stones, for gathering fagots, and for tearing flesh; now, it means falsehood and calumny.

In my view, any one who knowingly speaks in favour of injustice is a blasphemer. Whoever wishes to destroy liberty of thought, the honest expression of ideas, is a blasphemer. Whoever is willing to malign his neighbour simply because he differs with him upon a subject about which neither of them knows anything for certain is a blasphemer. If a crime can be committed against God, he commits it who imputes to God the commission of crime. The man who says that God ordered the assassination of women and babes, that He gave maidens to satisfy the lust of soldiers, that He enslaved His own children, that man is a blasphemer. In my judgment, it would be far better to deny the existence of God entirely.

It is also charged against me that I am endeavouring to "assassinate God." Well, I think that is about as reasonable as anything Mr. Talmage says. The idea of assassinating an infinite being is of course infinitely absurd. One would think Mr. Talmage had lost his reason! And yet this man stands at the head of the Presbyterian clergy. It is for this reason that I answer him. He is the only Presbyterian minister in the United States, so far as I know, able to draw an audience. He is, without doubt, the leader of that denomination. He is orthodox and conservative. He believes implicitly in the "Five Points" of Calvin, and says nothing simply for the purpose of attracting attention. He believes that God damns a man for His own glory; that He sends

babes to hell to establish His mercy, and that He filled the world with disease and crime simply to demonstrate His wisdom. He believes that billions of years before the earth was, God had made up His mind as to the exact number that He would eternally damn, and had counted His saints. This doctrine he calls "glad tidings of great joy." He really believes that every man who is true to himself is waging war against God; that every infidel is a rebel; that every free-thinker is a traitor, and that only those are good subjects who have joined the Presbyterian Church, know the Shorter Catechism by heart, and subscribe liberally toward lifting the mortgage on the Brooklyn Tabernacle. All the rest are endeavouring to assassinate God, plotting murder of the Holy Ghost, and applauding the Jews for the crucifixion of Christ. If Mr. Talmage is correct in his views as to the power and wisdom of God, I imagine that his enemies at last will be overthrown, that the assassins and murderers will not succeed, and that the Infinite, with Mr. Talmage's assistance, will finally triumph. If there is an infinite God, certainly he ought to have made man grand enough to have and express an opinion of his own. Is it possible that God can be gratified with the applause of moral cowards? Does he seek to enhance his glory by receiving the adulation of cringing slaves? Is God satisfied with the adoration of the frightened?

But Mr. Talmage has made an exceedingly important discovery. He finds nearly all the inventions of modern times mentioned in the Bible. I admit that I am somewhat amazed at the wisdom of the ancients. This discovery has been made just in the nick of time. Millions of people were losing their respect for the Old Testament. They were beginning to think that there was some discrepancy between the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel, and the latest developments in physical science. Thousands of preachers were telling their flocks that the Bible is not a scientific book; that Joshua was not an inspired astronomer, that God never enlightened Moses about geology, and that Ezekiel did not understand the entire art of cookery. These admissions caused some young people to suspect that the Bible, after all, was not inspired; that the prophets of antiquity did not know as

much as the discoverers of to-day. The Bible was falling into disrepute. Mr. Talmage has rushed to the rescue. He shows, and shows conclusively, as anything can be shown from the Bible, that Job understood all the laws of light, thousands of years before Newton lived; that he anticipated the discoveries of Descartes, Huxley, and Tyndall; that he was familiar with the telegraph and telephone; that Morse, Bell, and Edison simply put his discoveries in successful operation; that Nahum was, in fact, a master mechanic; that he understood perfectly the modern railway and described it so accurately that Trevethick, Foster, and Stephenson had no difficulty in constructing a locomotive.

He also has discovered that Job was well acquainted with the trade winds, and understood the mysterious currents, tides, and pulses of the sea; that Maury was a plagiarist; that Humboldt was simply a Biblical student. He finds that Isaiah and Solomon were far behind Galileo, Morse, Meyer, and Watt. This is a discovery wholly unexpected to me. If Mr. Talmage is right, I am satisfied the Bible is an inspired book. If it shall turn out that Joshua was superior to Laplace, that Moses knew more about geology than Humboldt, that Job as a scientist was the superior of Kepler, that Isaiah knew more than Copernicus, and that even the minor prophets excelled the inventors and discoverers of our time—then I will admit that infidelity must become speechless for ever. Until I read this sermon, I had never even suspected that the inventions of modern times were known to the ancient Jews. I never supposed that Nahum knew the least thing about railroads, or that Job would have known a telegraph if he had seen it. I never supposed that Joshua comprehended the three laws of Kepler. Of course I have not read the Old Testament with as much care as some other people have, and when I did read it I was not looking for inventions and discoveries. I had been told so often that the Bible was no authority upon scientific questions, that I was lulled almost into a state of lethargy. What is amazing to me is that so many men did read it without getting the slightest hint of the smallest invention.

To think that the Jews read that book for hundreds and hundreds of years, and yet went to their graves without the slightest notion of astronomy or geology, of railroads, telegraphs, or steamboats. And then to think that the early fathers made it the study of their lives, and died without inventing anything! I am astonished that Mr. Talmage does not figure in the records of the Patent Office himself. I cannot account for this, except upon the supposition that he was too honest to infringe on the patents of the patriarchs. After this, I shall read the Old Testament with more care.

Mr. Talmage endeavours to convict me of great ignorance in not knowing that the word translated "rib" should have been translated "side," and that Eve, after all, was not made out of a rib, but out of Adam's side. I may have been misled by taking the Bible as it is translated. The Bible account is simply this: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said: This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." If Mr. Talmage is right, then the account should be as follows: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his sides, and closed up the flesh thereof; and the side which the Lord God had taken from man made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said: This is now side of my side, and flesh of my flesh." I do not see that the story is made any better by using the word "side" instead of "rib." It would be just as hard for God to make a woman out of a man's side as out of a rib. Mr. Talmage ought not to question the power of God to make a woman out of a bone, and he must recollect that the less the material the greater the miracle. There are two accounts of the creation of man in Genesis, the first being in the twenty-first verse of the first chapter, and the second being in the twenty-first and twenty-second verses of the second chapter. According to the second account, "God formed man of the dust of the

ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." And after this, "God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and put the man" in this garden. After this, "He made every tree to grow that was good for food and pleasant to the sight," and, in addition, "the tree of life in the midst of the garden" beside "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." And He "put the man in the garden to dress it and keep it," telling him that he might eat of everything he saw except of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. After this, God, having noticed that it was not good for man to be alone, formed out of the ground every beast of the field, every fowl of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them, and Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field. "But for Adam there was not found an helpmeet for him." We are not told how Adam learned the language, nor how he understood what God said. I can hardly believe that any man can be created with the knowledge of a language. Education cannot be ready made and stuffed into a brain. Each person must learn a language for himself. Yet in this account we find a language ready made for man's use. And not only man was enabled to speak, but a serpent also has the power of speech, and the woman holds a conversation with this animal and with her husband; and yet no account is given of how any language was learned. God is described as walking in the garden in the cool of the day, speaking like a man—holding conversations with the man and woman, occasionally addressing the serpent. In the nursery rhymes of the world there is nothing more childish than the creation of man and woman. The early fathers of the church held that woman was inferior to man, because man was not made for woman, but woman for man; because Adam was made first and Eve afterward. They had not the gallantry of Robert Burns, who accounted for the beauty of woman from the fact that God practised on man first, and then gave woman the benefit of his experience. Think, in this age of the world, of a well educated, intelligent gentleman telling his little child that about six thousand years ago a mysterious being called God made the world out of His "omnipotence;" then made a man out of some dust

which he is supposed to have moulded into form ; that he put this man in a garden for the purpose of keeping the trees trimmed ; that after a little while he noticed that the man seemed lonesome, not particularly happy, almost homesick ; that then it occurred to this God that it would be a good thing for the man to have some company, somebody to help him trim the trees, to talk to him and cheer him up on rainy days ; that thereupon this God caused a deep sleep to fall on the man, took a knife, or a long, sharp piece of "omnipotence," and took out one of the man's sides, or a rib, and of that made a woman ; and then this man and woman got along real well till a snake got into the garden and induced the woman to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ; that the woman got the man to take a bite ; and afterwards both of them were detected by God, who was walking around in the cool of the evening, and thereupon they were turned out of the garden, lest they should put forth their hands and eat of the tree of life and live for ever. This foolish story has been regarded as the sacred, the inspired truth, as an account substantially written by God himself ; and thousands and millions of people have supposed it necessary to believe this childish falsehood, in order to save their souls. Nothing more laughable can be found in the fairy tales and folk-lore of savages. Yet this is defended by the leading Presbyterian divine, and those who fail to believe in the truth of this story are called "brazen faced fools," "deicides," and "blasphemers." By this story woman in all Christian countries was degraded. She was considered too impure to preach the gospel, too impure to distribute the sacramental bread, too impure to hand about the sacred wine, too impure to step within the "holy of holies," in the Catholic churches too impure to be touched by a priest. Unmarried men were considered purer than husbands and fathers. Nuns were regarded as superior to mothers, a monastery holier than a home, a nunnery nearer sacred than the cradle. And through all these years it has been thought better to love God than to love man, better to love God than to love your wife and children, better to worship an imaginary deity than to help your fellow-men.

I regard the rights of men and women equal. In love's fair realm husband and wife are king and queen, sceptred and crowned alike, and seated on the self-same throne.

Mr. Talmage denies that the Bible sanctions polygamy, but I see nothing in what he has said calculated to change my opinion. It has been admitted by thousands of theologians that the Old Testament upholds polygamy. Mr. Talmage is among the first to deny it. It will not do to say that David was punished for the crime of polygamy or concubinage. He was "a man after God's own heart." He was made a king. He was a successful general, and his blood is said to have flowed in the veins of God. Solomon was, according to the account, enriched with wisdom above all human beings. Was that a punishment for having had so many wives? Was Abraham pursued by the justice of God because of the crime against Hagar, or for the crime against his own wife? The verse quoted by Mr. Talmage to show that God was opposed to polygamy, namely, the eighteenth verse of the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus, cannot by any ingenuity be tortured into a command against polygamy. The most that can be possibly said of it is, that you shall not marry the sister of your wife while your wife is living. Yet this passage is quoted by Mr. Talmage as "a thunder of prohibition against having more than one wife." In the twentieth chapter of Leviticus it is enacted: "That if a man take a wife and her mother they shall be burned with fire." A commandment like that shows that he might take his wife and somebody else's mother. These passages have nothing to do with polygamy. They show whom you may marry, not how many; and there is not in Leviticus a solitary word against polygamy—not one. Nor is there such a word in Genesis, or Exodus, or in the entire Pentateuch—not one word. And yet these books are filled with the most minute directions about killing sheep and goats and doves—about making clothes for priests, about fashioning tongs and snuffers—and yet not one word against polygamy. It never occurred to the inspired writers that polygamy was a crime. It was taken as a matter of course. Women were simple property. Mr. Talmage, however, insists that, although God was against

polygamy, he permitted it, and at the same time threw his moral influence against it. Upon this subject he says: "No doubt God permitted polygamy to continue for some time, just as He permits murder, arson, and theft, and gambling to-day to continue, although He is against them." If God is the author of the Ten Commandments, He prohibited murder and theft, but He said nothing about polygamy. If He was so terribly against these crimes, why did He forget to mention the other. Was there not room enough on the tables of stone for just one word on this subject? Had He no time to give a commandment against slavery? Mr. Talmage of course insists that God has to deal with these things gradually, his idea being that if God had made a commandment against it all at once, the Jews would have had nothing more to do with Him. For instance, if we wanted to break cannibals of eating missionaries, we should not tell them all at once that it was wrong, that it was wicked to eat missionaries raw; we should induce them first to cook the missionaries, and gradually wean them from raw flesh. This would be the first great step. We would stew the missionaries, and after a time put a little mutton in the stew, not enough to excite the suspicion of the cannibal, but just enough to get him in the habit of eating mutton without knowing it. Day after day we would put in more mutton and less missionary, until finally the cannibal would be perfectly satisfied with clear mutton. Then we would tell him that it was wrong to eat missionary. After the cannibal got so that he liked mutton best, and cared nothing for missionary, then it would be safe to have a law upon the subject. Mr. Talmage insists that polygamy cannot exist among people who believe the Bible. In this he is mistaken. The Mormons all believe the Bible. There is not a single polygamist in Utah who does not insist upon the inspiration of the Old and New Testaments. The Rev. Mr. Newman, a kind of peripatetic theologian, once had a discussion, I believe, with Elder Heber Kimball at Salt Lake City, upon the question of polygamy. It is sufficient to say of this discussion that it is now circulated among the Mormons as a campaign document. The elder overwhelmed the parson. Passages of Scripture in favour of polygamy were

quoted by the hundred. The lives of all the patriarchs were brought forward, and poor parson Newman was driven from the field. The truth is, the Jews at that time were much like our forefathers. They were barbarians, and many of their laws were unjust and cruel. Polygamy was the right of all, practised, as a matter of fact, by the rich and powerful, and the rich and powerful were envied by the poor. In such esteem did the ancient Jews hold polygamy, that the number of Solomon's wives was given simply to enhance his glory. My own opinion is, that Solomon had very few wives and that polygamy was not general in Palestine. The country was too poor, and Solomon in all his glory was hardly able to support one wife. He was a poor barbarian king with a limited revenue, with a poor soil, with a sparse population, without art, without science, and without power. He sustained about the same relation to other kings as Delaware does to other States. Mr. Talmage says that God persecuted Solomon, and yet, if he will turn to the twenty-second chapter of 1. Chronicles, he will find what God promised to Solomon. God, speaking to David, says: "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from his enemies round about; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build a house in my name, and he shall be my son and I will be his father, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever." Did God keep his promise? So he tells us that David was persecuted by God, on account of his offences, and yet I find in the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-ninth chapter of 1. Chronicles, the following account of the death of David: "And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour." Is this true?

Then I am charged with attacking Queen Victoria, and of drawing a parallel between her and George Eliot, calculated to lower the reputation of the Queen. I never said a word against Victoria. The fact is, unlike Mr. Talmage, I am not acquainted with her—never met her in my life and know but little of her. I never happened to see her in "plain clothes, reading the Bible to the poor in the lane," neither did I ever

hear her sing. I most cheerfully admit that her reputation is good in the neighbourhood where she resides. In one of my lectures I drew a parallel between George Eliot and Victoria. I was showing the difference between a woman who had won her position in the world of thought and one who was queen by chance. This is what I said: "It no longer satisfies the ambition of a great man to be a king or emperor. The last Napoleon was not satisfied with being the Emperor of the French. He was not satisfied with having a circlet of gold about his head—he wanted some evidence that he had something of value in his head. So he wrote the life of Julius Cæsar that he might become a member of the French Academy. The emperors, the kings, the popes, no longer tower above their fellows. Compare King William with the philosopher Haeckel. The king is one of the "anointed by the Most High"—as they claim—one upon whose head has been poured the divine petroleum of authority. Compare this king with Haeckel, who towers an intellectual Colossus above the crowned mediocrity. Compare George Eliot with Queen Victoria. The queen is clothed in garments given her by blind fortune and unreasoning chance, while George Eliot wears robes of glory woven in the loom of her own genius. The world is beginning to pay homage to intellect, to genius, to art. I said not one word against Queen Victoria, and did not intend to even intimate that she was not an excellent woman, wife, and mother. I was simply trying to show that the world was getting great enough to place the genius above an accidental queen. Mr. Talmage, true to the fawning, cringing spirit of orthodoxy, lauds the living queen and cruelly maligns the genius dead. He digs open the grave of George Eliot, and tries to stain the sacred dust of one who was the greatest woman England has produced. He calls her "an adulteress." He attacks her because she was an atheist—because she abhorred Jehovah, denied the inspiration of the Bible, denied the dogma of eternal pain, and with all her heart despised the Presbyterian creed. He hates her because she was great and brave and free—because she lived without "faith" and died without fear—because she dared to give her honest thought, and grandly bore the taunts and slanders

of the Christian world. George Eliot tenderly carried in her heart the burdens of our race. She looked through pity's tears upon the faults and frailties of mankind. She knew the springs and seeds of thought and deed, and saw with cloudless eyes through all the winding ways of greed, ambition, and deceit, where folly vainly plucks with thorn-pierced hands the fading flowers of selfish joy—the highway of eternal right. Whatever her relations may have been—no matter what I think or others say, or how much all regret the one mistake in all her self-denying, loving life—I feel and know that in the court where her own conscience sat as judge, she stood acquitted—pure as light and stainless as a star. How appropriate here, with some slight change, the wondrously poetic and pathetic words of Laertes at Ophelia's grave—

Leave her i' the earth ;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring ! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall this woman be,
When thou liest howling !

I have no words with which to tell my loathing for a man who violates a noble woman's grave.

