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Lectures of Col. R. G. Ingersoll, Vol. 1

Robert Green Ingersoll

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The lectures of the well-known veteran of the Civil War and lawyer, colonel Robert Green Ingersoll, serve as pretext for the author to express his agnostic conceptions.

Held on different occasions, such as public conferences, meetings on various themes or even funerals, the lectures were grouped and published in 12 volumes, together with other works of the author. This one is the first of the series, the subjects discussed in them being, among others, hell, gods, ghosts and individuality.

Also, the volume contains the eulogistic speech of the author at the grave of his brother and the discourse held at the grave of a child whose name is not revealed. Although the words are of consolation, the tone has accusative accents when even the smallest matter associated with religion comes in discussion.

Regarding colonel Ingersoll's belief in agnosticism, many of his opponents ironically observed that his solid knowledge of the Bible could make him an exceptional clergyman. Indeed, most of his lectures abound in quotes from The Old Testament, The Books of Prophets and The New Testament.

However, he uses the fragments to underline the contradiction between what is written in the Bible and how the percepts are applied in everyday life. For instance, in the lecture that opens the volume, called "Gods", the author makes the shocking affirmation that the priests indoctrinate people with fear for making them worship the divinities.

Christianity, Ingersoll says, makes no exception, since the first promoters of the Protestantism were burn on the steak for saying that God is loving and merciful, instead of ruthless and vindictive. The latter "qualities" were attributed to the divinity by the Catholic Church, as this served the interests of its clergymen.

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