

every demonstration of science with contempt, but the time came when it either had to defend itself or surrender. A reconciliation was attempted, and theologians said a literal interpretation was absurd, and that many things rejected by science were susceptible of explanation in allegory, metaphor and symbolism. At last the Church stole the livery of science and began to teach evolution itself. An American divine, Henry Ward Beecher, was the first to preach it boldly from the pulpit, and for doing so he was anathematized by theologians everywhere, and yet only thirteen years after his death it has been generally accepted by the Church, and the immanence of God is now recognized in evolution through the operation of natural law. Truly it may be said the sceptic of one generation is the orthodox of the next. In the meantime the search for a *modus vivendi* between science and theology produced an alarming amount of scepticism in the form of materialism, which is still without the pale of the Church. The age seems ripe for another church reformation, and an intellectual and spiritual emancipation from obsolete creeds which cannot be preached, and from a dead formalism of traditional rite and ceremony, the outcome of mediæval superstition and spiritual darkness which are all the devices of men. A new flame of awakened spiritual consciousness begins to burn on the watch-towers of Zion, calling upon a recreant church to doff its external trappings of pride and presumption, and return to the beauty and simplicity of the early church democracy when rich and poor met in brotherly love to partake of the mystic symbols of a Saviour's passion in the bare upper room at Jerusalem. There is a sad lack of reverence for sacred things everywhere. People go to church to be amused rather than instructed, the preaching is undergoing a gradual process of extinction, and the musical part of the service is the great attraction, and churches compete with each other in providing high-class music to attract and entertain their congregations, and the emotional and sentimental is appealed to rather than the spiritual and intellectual.

And yet, notwithstanding the lack of reverence for spiritual things at no time was there ever a broader spirit of humanity abroad than the present. Human life was never held more sacred and the splendid provision made for every class of dependents and every class of suffering is one of the noblest tributes to our Christian civilization. Is the cry of famine heard in distant lands, then the purse-strings are opened and money pours out in rich abundance for its relief. Are our soldiers fighting in foreign lands to establish the rights of freemen, then a nation's gratitude is poured out to those who risk their lives in defence of the sacred cause of liberty.