

its influence felt among thoughtful minds of every class. It has among its friends some of the most profound and cultivated minds of the age. The masses, although they can give but scanty attention to scientific and philosophical questions, have caught the spirit of the age, and are thinking less about God and more about themselves, inquiring less as to what they shall do to be "saved" in another world, and asking more how they can add to their comfort and prosperity in this world.

Our literature is comparatively Liberal. Indeed, its infidel tendencies are the lament of the pulpit and religious press. The best magazines in the country are objects of frequent attack by the evangelical press for the heterodox character of many of their contributions and editorials. The secular press is chiefly in the hands and under the control of men who have outgrown the whole Christian theology. If they show it respect it is not because they have any love or sympathy for it, but because it has been sanctioned by the faith and piety of millions, and because it is yet nominally the religion of the people for whom they write. The great majority of professional men are undoubtedly Freethinkers. Rev. Theodore Cuyler, some time ago, raised the query, "Why is a lawyer rarely seen at a prayer-meeting?" Physicians, as a class, are infidels. And as the Scotch minister Gilfillan says, "When a scientific man is at the same time a babe at the feet of Christ, he is judged an exception to the general rule, and stared at as a prodigy." The public advocates of Freethought now speak in the best halls, and to larger audiences in the West than the clergy can get to hear their sermons. And the Liberal cause is gaining strength every day.

A few years ago the *N. Y. Evangelist* had the frankness and candor to admit that, "among all the earnest-minded young men who are at this moment leading in thought and action in America, we venture to say that four-fifths are sceptical of the great historical facts of Christianity. What is told as Christian doctrine by the Churches claims none of their consideration, and there is among them a general distrust of the clergy, as a class, and an utter disgust with the very aspect of modern Christianity and of church worship. This scepticism is not flippant; little is said about it. It is not a peculiarity alone of Radicals and fanatics; most of them are men of calm and even balance of mind, and belong to no class of ultraists. It is not worldly and selfish. Nay, the doubters lead in the bravest and most self-denying enterprises of the day."

Rev. Dr. Newman, of Washington, in a recent address, reported in a secular paper, said: "Within the next decade, ay, within the next five years, Christianity will be tried as it has never been tried before. There are men in England and America to-day, who will bring to the assault a ripeness of scholarship, a power of intellect, and a breadth of view unequalled by the past, and there are men and women before me to-night who are destined to have their faith terribly shaken."

Thus we see the nations, which are accorded the first rank as regards enlightenment and prosperity, and the comparatively elevated condition

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