

ing such blows as have never been dealt it before. France, the most prosperous country in Europe, has, within the past year, expelled religious orders which in years gone by were wont to rule her councils. In Ireland, above the din of sectarian and class strife, due so largely to priestly teachings and priest-ridden ignorance, is heard the death knell of priestly rule. As a gentleman of great observation remarked the other day: "In fifteen years every theatre in Britain, the United States and Canada will be playing travesties upon the orthodoxy of the day; and the manager who takes the first step will make his fortune." And if this apply to England and America, with how much greater force does it apply to France and Germany, the two foremost nations of the continent? In the latter, not more than one fifth of the city populations pretend to attend Church; and of both countries, almost without qualification, may it be said that (save the clergy and those studying for the ministry), the educated and thinking classes regard our systems of orthodoxy (both Roman Catholic and Protestant) as what they really are: *a medley of oriental legends and mediæval mysticism, a libel upon the attributes of God and a parody on the teachings of Jesus Christ!*

But, it will be asked, shall men reject everything; is agnosticism the creed of the world, and materialism the goal of the race? We think not. Ninety-nine men out of every hundred *do* believe in a Supreme Ruler of the universe, who is cognizant of, and to whom we are responsible for, our acts and thoughts. Men *do* believe that this God is a Being whose every attribute is perfection, and whose Bible is the starry world above us, the glorious earth beneath us, and our consciences within us. Men *do* believe that this God, who, for some wise purpose has placed us here, is plenteous in mercy to all—whether Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free—who put their trust in Him, and live that the world may be somewhat better for their life. Men *do* believe "that this life, though not perhaps, not probably, our only sphere, is still an integral one and the