

sphere is concerned, there is less presumption and greater carefulness than a quarter of a century ago. Then, science in various departments was exultant over some of its greatest discoveries and grandest triumphs; and in its exultation it made claims which, in calmer moments, could not be vindicated. But now, a much more reasonable spirit prevails, and fewer absurd or extravagant claims are made. Did our space permit many examples could be given here. In like manner, the Apologete has had the ground of debate more distinctly marked out, and the problems under discussion more definitely stated. The result of this is that he has been able to arrange his defenses better, and to discover the strongholds of the enemy more accurately. The spirit of hopefulness also is now much stronger than it was some years ago, and in not a few cases the Apologete has been bold enough to make incursions into the enemy's territory and bring back valuable spoils. The advocates of opposing views have often been thus compelled to pay unwilling tribute to the truth of Christianity. The outlook from the battlements of the Christian system may now be said to be very hopeful, so far as the intellectual elements of the conflict are concerned. If we cannot fully accept the spirit of optimism, we may at least lay aside all pessimistic views.

But while all this is true so far as the intellectual elements are concerned, the spirit of secularism has developed very extensively in certain quarters, and it is in connection with this spirit that some of the chief dangers to the Christian religion are now to be found. In some cases a sensational and materialistic philosophy may be the soil in which secularism naturally grows, but secularism is embraced and acted upon by many who know nothing of, and care less for, philosophy. The race for riches, the vast growth of commerce, and the consequent conflict between capital and labour are partly the cause and partly the effect of secularism. The general views, which present advocates of secularist theories set forth in their various writings, leave no place for the Christian religion, and in certain quarters the spirit of secularism is that of bitter opposition towards religion. Its more respectable advocates content themselves with advocating its peculiar principles to take the place of those of the Christian system for the well-being and elevation of society.

In many respects, secularism is one of the most difficult things with which the Apologete has to deal. It has no definite form, so that it is not easy to lay hold of it. It is scarcely a system, it has