

## EDITORIAL.

THE tendency of the times is toward liberalism. Preachers, educators, historians, and the rest may say as much as they like to the contrary, yet the fact remains, and cannot well be contradicted by sober, honest thinking people. And it is far more than a tendency; it has for years been a steady, and it is wise to say a healthy growth. The average right-minded person of the present century fears little from the broad and liberal view which the world is taking to-day of the affairs of men; but the rock which they do fear the liberal ship may wreck itself upon is religion—or lack of it. In morals, in every-day and public life, in art, in literature, and in science, the world is every day broadening, but is there the same tendency in religious fields? We think not, only in so much as it becomes a healthy development and a condition in which the iron bonds of prejudice and superstition are being broken, and a solid and desirable foundation reached. One hears very little now-a-days about “free-thinkers.” Perhaps they meet somewhere in out-of-the-way corners; perhaps they have their conventions and their discussions, but who ever hears about them? Certainly they are not popular; and popularity goes a great way in religious as well as non-religious circles. Yet narrowness does sometimes show that it still exists, and that home and church teachings are not always calculated to broaden and liberalize. An incident in one of the up-town streets of New York the other Sunday serves to illustrate this, and shows that “out of the mouths of children” may come theological repartee more forceful than elegant. A little boy, not more than eight years old, was trudging home from his Presbyterian Sunday school with a library book in his hand—“The Birds’ Christmas Carol,” by the way, and as sweet, clean and poetic a children’s story as ever was placed in the hands of a child of any denomination. At the corner of one of the streets the boy was met by a little girl playmate. “Got your catechism?” she cried. “No,” answered the boy, “it’s my Sunday school book.” “Oh! you go to Yankee Sunday school!” “Well, it isn’t a Paddy school,” was the hot rejoinder, and the two playmates separated in anger. The incident was repeated to their parents by the children, when they reached their homes; the families, once on friendly terms, became estranged, and no end of hard and bitter feeling was caused. Yet, had the parents stopped to consider, they would have found themselves the ones in the wrong. Neither Protestant nor Catholic teachers promulgate such things to their pupils to-day, and when a religious prejudice of this sort arises it can in nine cases out of ten be traced to the home circle. The Catholic American is justly proud of his title, and while all of us are children under Uncle Sam’s care we ought none of us to despise the honest name of “Yankee.” There are yet a few—a very few, let us be thankful—who have been reared in the South, and whose hot blood has not cooled since the war, who consider all Yankees who live or who have lived north of the Mason and Dixon line. With them the race prejudice is as strong as—and in some cases stronger than—between the whites and blacks. Yet another generation, and this ridiculous prejudice will be

largely swept away. It is dying a slow death, but no less a sure one.

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MANY readers of GODEY'S can remember when Charles Dickens's "American Notes" aroused the ire and indignation of the people who were hurt in feelings and pride by the author's caustic, and what at the time appeared to be his malicious pen. But the injury was not lasting; many forgot and forgave; so when Dickens returned to this country a second time he was received with more favor and enthusiasm than on his first visit. Dickens's "American Notes"—leaving aside the fact that they were unjust, uncharitable, and uncalled-for—were bright, crisp, and every line was and is readable. Since Dickens's day who shall say how many foreigners have visited our shores and returned to paint us as they saw us? It must be confessed these contributions to a most curious class of literature have in most cases been decidedly uncomplimentary. The latest aspirant to this cheap class of writing is Paul Bourget, who is certainly a clever enough fellow, but who returns to Paris with American notes, and who expresses a determination to "write us up." It is announced that the forthcoming book will be "caustic, cutting, and brilliant." Very good; but let this Frenchman keep his notes to light his study fire. He may need them, and fuel may be scarce with him should he publish the book. The fact is, the reading public in France, in England, and in this country, are tired of this sort of thing. We have our faults and peculiarities, individually and as a people, but they are not so glaring nor so many that they need be mirrored by every witty foreigner who comes to our shores. Let the people who would buy this book

turn about and make a study of the American people on their own account—provided they do not already know them—and they will be sure to find quite enough to interest them without depending upon the hurried and careless "notes" which some strolling money-maker has taken. To patronize such people and to buy their ware is to discourage patriotism, especially in the coming generation, which has little enough of this element, at the best.

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JUST what is the bachelor girl, not the wisest of us can tell; but a bachelor of the other sex remarked, the other day, that it was a girl who wanted to be a man. Perhaps that covers the ground to some extent. Much is being printed at present about the bachelor girl, and those who have seen her say she is something to admire. As we understand her, the bachelor girl is one who is so independent that she may live like a man, if she likes; at least, she is supposed to be mannish. In our mind's eye she dresses as near like a man as the law will let her; she swaggers, carries a walking stick, smokes cigarettes—or perhaps cigars—lives by herself in bachelor quarters, and goes out alone o' nights if she takes a notion to. She does not stalk about, grim, gaunt, and ungainly, nor is she what a generation ago would have been called a blue-stocking. She is altogether different. At first glance she might easily be taken for a handsome boy—provided, of course, she has some foundation for beauty; but all girls in short hair and a young man's make-up have a certain *chic* air which cannot be otherwise than charming. In fact, those who have studied and know her say the bachelor girl *is* charming, and that even though she have the appear-

ance and some of the traits of a man, she, in her purest and simplest type, is not mannish, but on the contrary is as much a girl as her sister who "lives like other people." One is apt to associate strong-mindedness with the bachelor girl, but she need not of necessity be so. If independence means being strong-minded, then she probably is; but the term is so often misapplied that one should be careful how one uses it. Certainly the ideal bachelor girl should be able to take care of herself—for presumably she is alone in the world. She may have a big brother, but it hardly seems proper that she should have any one else's big brother to look after her. If she consents to belong to and be identified with this class of girl, she should at the same time be willing to shoulder all the responsibilities, to fight her own battles, and to fight the battles of her sister bachelor if need be. The dress, the mental strength, and the independence are not so bad as distinguishing traits of the bachelor girl; but save us from the swagger. The cigarettes and walking stick would be preferable.

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AN English writer has just brought before her public a subject which ought to interest music lovers in this country quite as much as those in England. This writer sharpens her pen to a fine point, and then proceeds to pitch into the street organ-grinder and the street musician generally. The educated ear

cannot be pleased by the music one hears on the streets, and so long as such music is supposed to be for the poor, it is hardly a step toward higher musical education when such street horrors are tolerated. There is no reason why the so-called popular airs of the day should not be played on the streets for the benefit of those who like them; for many of them, like the negro melodies, have a certain pleasant swing, and a natural harmony, like the uneducated and untrained voice. The greatest argument against this street music is that it is so badly rendered. The larger cities in this country are following the lead taken by their foreign cousins, and introducing public concerts in the parks and squares throughout the entire summer season. In fact, New York continues them until there is a chill in the air. But the thousands of people who turn out to hear good music—many of them have no other opportunity—all goes to show that it is appreciated. At these open-air concerts the classical along with the popular makes up the programmes, and so all tastes are gratified. The wheezy, creaking old hand-organ is certainly something that war should be brought against, and the street band should be the next to go. Sometimes one hears a pleasant strain from the Italian street band composed of harp and violin; but the Italian ear and hand, no matter how well trained, cannot regulate the tones of a hand-organ. If we must have street music, let it be good.

