

1867 a free religious association was formed, and in 1875 there arose several societies for ethical culture. These are all professedly anti-religious. Their object is to make ethics and morality independent of religion, or rather to construct a purely ethical, non-spiritual, and non-theistic religion. Although these societies have their branches also in England they seem to meet with more appreciation in Germany and Austria, where important thinkers are counted among their representatives. Among them the late Professor Georg von Gizycki held a prominent place, and did much through translations to popularise this branch of American literature. It cannot be said, however, that either in this country or in Germany this line of thought has acquired any great popular influence.

In this country morality as taught in the schools is still essentially religious and theistic. In Germany the necessity has not yet been felt of elaborating, for purposes of education, a purely secular code of morality, a moral catechism. And thus, if we leave out the United States of America, where every school of religious and moral teaching thrives alongside of others, France is the only country in Europe where a pronounced secularisation of morals and ethics has taken place. It is accordingly there that the most strenuous efforts have been made to place the theory and teaching of morality upon a purely philosophical basis. A periodical with the title 'Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale' was there started in the year 1893 by Xavier Léon, and testifies to the increasing interest which the subject of ethics in connection with metaphysics commands in that country.