

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE VII.

NOTES.

THE POVERTY AND VICE OF LONDON.

THE eccentric W. H. H. Murray once forcibly remarked that "if the good people were removed out of any great city it would leave hell; whereas, were the bad to be removed and the good left, the result would be heaven." All large cities afford the conditions which most severely test human character and develop the extremes both of evil and of good. London, being the largest city in the world, and especially in the Christian world, illustrates this truth in extreme degree.

The slums of London are not by any means confined to the East End. One has to go but a little way from any of the fashionable streets to find a congested population living on the very border of despair. The extent of poverty in London is beyond comprehension; and it does not grow less in times of business prosperity. While the last five years have seen an unprecedented boom in British export trade, they have also witnessed an unprecedented growth of pauperism in London. According to the returns just issued by the Local Government Board, it appears that there were 3,000 more paupers at the end of 1907 than there were one year before, while 46,000 more had been in receipt of relief at the beginning of this winter than had demanded help one year ago. The total number receiving temporary help at the opening of this winter was 800,101. The total amount expended by the City for the relief of the poor during the last half year, aside from that furnished by private charity, amounted to \$3,825,000.

According to statistics carefully gathered, two-thirds of this poverty is directly traceable to the use of alcoholic beverages, which nearly every grocer sells freely in sealed packages.

A large number of the sub-post-offices are located in such groceries. Saloons (or "public houses" as they are called in England) abound in every part of the city, and are patronized by men, women, and children. According to a discourse preached in one of the most fashionable and largely attended churches of the established order, it had been ascertained that two public houses near by were visited between 4 P.M. and 11 P.M., the previous Saturday, by a crowd of men, women, and children numbering 1,900, of whom 600 were children. Nothing in London oppresses an American more sadly than to see the numbers of poor women who openly patronize the saloons. Upon the opening of the bars in the morning, dozens of women may be seen waiting to be served; and at almost any time of day women with children in arms may be seen going in and out of these demoralizing centers of influence.

At the same time it should be said that every form of activity tending to promote temperance is in operation in the City and throughout the Kingdom, and is supported by the adherents of all religious denominations. As a consequence of this work it is generally believed that there has been a great improvement among the middle classes. But such legal methods for restricting the sale of alcoholic beverages as are effectually used in the United States are practically unknown in England. The public houses of the Kingdom are regarded as having a vested right in the profits derived from their licensed privilege to sell, so that it is thought that if the privilege were taken away, the proprietors could claim from the State an indemnity for their loss. Moreover, drinks are generally served in the public houses by barmaids—a custom which is pretty generally supposed to be demoralizing in its tendency. But every effort to change this custom is met by a great outcry against the hardship of depriving 100,000 barmaids of the only means of subsistence in which they have been trained to earn their livelihood.

The extent to which the liquor traffic is imbedded in the financial interests of the country was strikingly exemplified

in the effect of the Ministerial bill just presented for the further regulation and diminution of public houses. The bill proposes to reduce the number of licensed houses by 30,000 in fourteen years. On the day following the introduction of this bill, the market value of stocks secured by the liquor traffic shrank \$160,000,000, and well nigh produced a financial panic.

A bill is now before Parliament to grant "local option" to wards and municipalities in the matter of licensing saloons. But the English Government is so much more centralized than our own, that it will probably be some time before public sentiment will be educated up to the point of passing such a measure. The doctrine of States' rights in America and the traditional authority of the New England "town-meeting" have familiarized the citizens of the United States with the principle of local option in general, so that its application in restraint of the use of strong drink does not seem strange. In England, moreover, the principle seems, as yet, subversive of good order and hazardous to the rights of the individual who chances to be unpopular in his own community. Nevertheless, a modified acceptance of the principle seems to be but a question of time. Among others who have petitioned for the passage of the present bill are 1,900 of the clergymen of the Church of England.

If London is full of intemperance and poverty, it is also full of institutions endeavoring to counteract these evils. Hospitals, orphanages, settlements, and missions are found in all parts of the City, and none of them fail of receiving liberal support. The late Lord Mayor signalized his retirement from office by raising \$1,000,000 to equip a hospital for crippled children. Sums poured in from rich and poor alike until considerably more was received than he had asked for. There are hospitals for every class of patients and for all classes.

General Booth of the Salvation Army is one of the "lions" of the Kingdom. Oxford confers upon him a degree. When he is ill in America the papers of all classes note with great

minuteness the stages of his recovery to health. In short, he is the kind of man that the King delights to honor. His efforts to induce the poor of the cities to go out and live upon small holdings in the country are measurably successful, and are regarded as worthy of imitation by Parliament itself. Through his efforts large numbers have been helped to find homes in Canada. The drawback is, that only the best and most vigorous of London's poor can be drawn into the country, or will be allowed to enter Canada, and so some of the worst aspects of London's poverty are intensified by these laudable efforts towards relief.

But the Salvation Army is by no means the chief instrumentality at work for the relief of poverty and the prevention of vice in London. There are "settlements" without number where cultivated men and women are living in close contact with the unfortunate classes and exemplifying in their lives and in all their efforts the Christian spirit in the most effective manner. We have heard so much of Toynbee Hall that many have been led to suppose that that was the chief, if not the only, work of its sort. But the Oxford Settlement in Bethnal Green is far larger. In that section of the city thirty Oxford students are in continual residence, maintaining at seven different centers work for the poorer classes, of the most effective kind; while in the same district an equal number of centers of influence among women are kept in operation by their devoted sisters of the Church of England.

In connection, also, with missions of the most influential churches of the established order, there is an organization of the Church Army, in which the curates go out with others into the highways and the hedges to draw the wayward within the circle of good and helpful influences. Almost every Dissenting church also has its mission schools and its deaconesses and lay helpers who are making inroads upon the realms of evil. One flourishing Quaker meeting is composed almost entirely of members who have been brought in through the efforts of one of their missions. The Bedford Institute, established fifty years ago for the advancement of

the poor of the Spitalfields neighborhood by a wealthy Quaker early associated with Elizabeth Fry, has efficient branches in several other parts of the city also. Then there are model self-supporting lodging-houses, where, for a few cents, sober men by the thousand can get lodging, bath, and a chance to cook a breakfast. And there are large apartment-houses, built by Peabody, and others who have followed his example, where the respectable poor are comfortably and neatly housed on very reasonable terms. The municipality also has gone farther than some feel is wise in providing model apartment-houses at low rates of rental.

And yet, as said at the beginning, the hopeless poor of London increase both actually and relatively. The problem certainly is one which it is fearful to contemplate, and one does not wonder to find Socialism prevailing to an increasing extent among those who are most actively engaged in humanitarian efforts. The good deaconesses who are day by day visiting the abodes of wretchedness in Whitechapel cry out in their anguish, "Why cannot something be done to equalize the conditions of people in this great city?" Why should so many children be compelled to go to school in the winter months shoeless and without breakfast? A company of 300 unemployed from one section of the city call upon their compatriot John Burns, now in the Cabinet, and ask, "Why is it that 5,000 men in our section of the city are, in these prosperous times, out of employment?"

It is the existence of the great army of the unemployed which gives strength to the powerful movement in favor of a protective tariff which is now going on. By protecting various industries it is hoped to stimulate certain lines of business, and so increase the demand for home labor. Singularly enough, it is the Conservative party which is urging the adoption of a protective tariff, and this is called "Tariff Reform." But the labor leaders are still found in favor of free trade, believing, as they do, that a protective tariff would raise the cost of living, and so, while helping the few, would overburden the many who are striving for a livelihood.

One of the most touching appeals for charity, in the City this winter, has been to raise money to buy shoes for shoeless children attending the public schools. Another equally pit-eous appeal for charity has been to provide dinners for the children who have come to school without breakfast. "Why," it is asked, "should not all this be done by the state; and why should not the state provide pensions for all the aged?"

The pressure to have the state buy shoes for the shoeless, and food for hungry children and old people indiscriminately, is very strong and just now is growing in strength. So far, indeed, has Parliament gone in this direction that it is instituting methods by which the land of the great estates is to be forcibly divided into parcels and sold to small holders.

But, properly enough, the wiser ones hesitate at the adoption of measures which will weaken parental responsibility for the support of children, and remove the main incentive for economy and thrift in middle life, and tend to break down the respect for private property which has been the mainspring of modern industrial progress. Whether 'tis wise to fly from the "ills we have," "to others," which may be far more serious, "that we know not of," is a question which cannot be answered upon the spur of the moment. It is doubtless best that movement in this direction should be slow and tentative. Apparently there is a near limit, though ill-defined, to the profitable absorption by the state of private responsibilities and enterprises. On the whole, an orphanage cannot be so good as a home. Parental responsibility cannot be lightly thrown upon the state without disastrous results. In general, it must be best for the individual to bear in his youth the burden of preparation for old age.

Even in the matter of municipal ownership of public utilities, less advantage has been gained than was to have been expected. Three years ago the London City Council invested in a number of steamboats to run on the river Thames. After having lost \$700,000 in the venture, their boats are now offered for sale. They thereby save a loss of \$40,000 per year in running expenses, besides that from the further

deterioration of their property. Likewise the business calculation of the City Council in straightening old streets and opening new has not been justified by the results. Great spaces which have been cleared of old buildings are not so greedily bought up by capitalists as was expected. The tramways of one large city, at least, have been made to appear profitable for a few years simply by manipulating the accounts so as to conceal the deterioration of the plant. The municipality, with its changing officials, cannot secure the high grade of service obtained by private parties interested in their own property.

Socialism as a theory is sure to be discredited by the weakness and perversity of the human agents by which it is carried into effect. In presence of the terrific evils which seem to be the offspring of our material civilization, one cannot help sympathizing with those disappointed philanthropists who in very desperation would be willing to venture upon almost any experiment that would give hope of relief. But we must remember that even an All-wise Creator respects the freedom of the human will, and does not force men to be virtuous. It would seem, therefore, the part of wisdom for us to build up our hope of the future regeneration of the world by redoubling the moral influences set in motion by Him who freely confessed that equality was not the goal of human existence, but that, from one cause or another, the poor we should always have with us.

G. FREDERICK WRIGHT.

LONDON, ENGLAND, March 4, 1908.

USE AND ABUSE OF APOLOGETICS.¹

I NEVER placed apologetics in the foreground. The best generals always taught that in a severe war one perishes as soon as he stands on the defensive alone. He can expect success only when he boldly ventures to attack the enemy.

When in 1868, coming from my quiet village of Guelder, I became, in Utrecht, acquainted for the first time with our

¹[Introduction to the Dutch Edition of Professor Wright's "Scientific Confirmations of Old Testament History."]

most prominent apologists, the beliefs which they held and the positions which they were maintaining did not at all realize my expectations. There was nothing in their beliefs to inspire courage or to arouse hope of victory or any desire for aggressive action, but rather to create anxiety lest we lose here an outwork and there a trench, and hence a desire to retreat to the middle of the fortification in order not to be threatened with complete defeat.

This vexed and troubled me so that I did not feel the least inclination to devote my youthful strength to the service of such a kind of warfare. By such endless apologetic and such constant attitude of defense the assailants were permitted to determine the entire plan of battle and to fix upon the vulnerable points of attack, and the apologists were compelled to follow. The apologists had no strategic scheme at all. They always were obliged to take the worst positions which their antagonists had selected for them. The result was, of course, that they lost ground at every move and abandoned what in the beginning they had endeavored to defend. Gradually the ground to defend became smaller and the phalanxes of the besiegers became more solid and bold. A great part of all that was sacred to believers was in that way always made to hang upon a thorny dispute over a single verse. When a certain book appeared it seemed that in answering it they had at least put in security this or that sacred fact; but when after three months another had appeared which overturned the erected timber work, our apologists were perplexed.

When Easter was coming on in 1870 one was doubtful whether Jesus really had risen or still remained in his grave. It was all uncertain. And the worst of it was that our believing apologists would not say this to everybody. They tried to arrange that no one should observe it, and were fearful lest the congregations should be conscious of the perplexity. Instead of deriving courage, strength, and animation from the faith of the church, the apologists day by day became accustomed to the experience of cherishing simultaneously two divergent beliefs, the one to be put before the

congregation, and the other to be nursed in the privacy of their own studies.

Some of them could not bear to do this, and endeavored to adjust matters in a different manner. They laid a new philosophical foundation to support the belief of the church, and then erected upon it their own subjective scheme which they presented to the congregation. What met with the approbation of this clique was called "the belief of the church." It was this philosophical theology, cast in forms of their own creation, which they entitled "The Confession of the Church of Christ," so it was that dogma after dogma tumbled, and Holy Writ was metamorphosed into a collection of books out of which came a more sacred spirit. But you could not rely on the Holy Writ itself.

Very soon I felt that neither this apologetic nor this philosophical theology could give back to Christians their old courage by confession, their former strength of conviction, their strong faith. The strength of the first congregation of Christians depended upon their testimony to facts, upon the confession of their sacred convictions before everybody, even their most violent opposers. Did the church believe these facts or did it not? If not, then neither scientific apologetic nor philosophic enveloping of the truth could make the Christian movement an authority in the world. But if the church believes the facts, the strength of the confession based on this belief should show itself. Only a fresh and inspired conviction can give this lost faith back to us. And this is what has happened. We need to compare the Christian movement of the present time only with that of 1870, to see clearly the wonderful change that was the result of it. One does not now need to hide himself, but may go into the public highway of life and determine his course for himself. One does not now need to argue about his belief, but merely to show it, and all opposers feel that in that way there comes a spiritual force which they have no means of opposing.

The conclusion must not be drawn from this that later on, and in their own field, the apologists will not acquire the

right of joining in the discussion; provided that we first had conquered our free position and are standing no more exhausted and out of breath, but fresh and vigorous, on ground of our own choosing. Having reached such a position, we are compelled to go back and clear the ground behind us.

Among those who have made themselves ready for the contest, we find Dr. G. Frederick Wright of Oberlin, in Ohio, one of the middle in the United States of America. Dr. Wright is a clear-headed man: what he writes runs smoothly and is pellucid. But he is principally versed in natural philosophy, and has acquired the right to put in his word in this part of science. In proof of this I need only refer to his works, "The Ice Age in North America," "Man and the Glacial Period," "The Icefields of Greenland, and Life in the North Atlantic," and last but not least his "Asiatic Russia," etc. These titles show that Dr. Wright did not study these problems of nature as something of little consequence, but that he made a special study of them. Nor did he squander his strength upon minute details, but concentrated it upon a definite line of investigation. On this account one cannot help trusting him. He does not wander from the subject in hand, but penetrates to the vital part of the question laid before him, and shows that he is an authority in what he has undertaken. Although he often tires you by giving particulars which for abundance you would like to pass over, you cannot but acknowledge but that he strengthens his argument by this study of details.

When at the close of 1906 there appeared a new work of his, "Scientific Confirmations of Old Testament History," and it reached our country, I immediately had the desire to make his work accessible to the masses by translating it into the Dutch; I was the more ready to do this because in this work Dr. Wright has prefaced his detailed observations by a general treatment of the trustworthiness of the history, maintaining the high character of the evidence supporting the common belief concerning the Scriptures, against the wildness and conceit of the critics. The criticism at present prevalent

in Holland which demolishes the history is the consequence of a high presumptuous individuality which forgets entirely that human society can exist advantageously only by the maintenance of the foundations of confidence.

Being too busy to translate the work myself, I ventured to request my friend Dr. Oranje to charge himself with this quiet work. Incapable of ministering to a congregation in their public meetings, in consequence of a painful disease, I thought it possible that he might like to serve the church in this quite different manner. It seemed that I was not mistaken. Scarcely had he read the work than he declared with enthusiasm that he was quite willing to translate it for the Dutch Christians, and the reader when studying it will observe the great care with which he carried out his undertaking.¹

I hope no one will be discouraged when reading the details which are occasionally very profound. The tendency is not to bring us back again to the still forbidden path of the apologetic, but to show what could be said to defend that which is left to us when the fight *pro ares et focis* was over.

It is hoped that no offense will be taken at the attempt of Dr. Wright to make clear the passing of the Jews through the Red Sea, and through the Jordan, by invoking the aid of irregular operations of nature. The belief in God's wonderful might does not require that in explanation of the wonders we should exclude the operations of nature which would have taken place in any event.

When I say that, even if Ahab and Elijah had not existed, a fire would still have fallen down at the same moment and on the same place where Elijah's sacrifice was offered, I do not say that it was not a wonder. The objective as well as the subjective wonder exists. The objective wonder is the falling down of the fire just on the same place and at the same moment of the historical event. The subjective wonder is that Elijah without knowing anything of the position of affairs in nature dared supplicate for it and had faith to believe that the fire would come.

¹ [We regret to say that, greatly to the loss of the Christian public, Dr. Oranje died soon after completing this work.]

In this way Dr. Wright writes about some of the great wonders in the history of Israel. I dare not say that he always has taken the right view of what happened, but even if in a single instance he might be mistaken I still praise his endeavors to connect wonders in the history with the course of the operations of nature. That his own belief in the wonders does not waver, he states on more than one page.

KUYPER.

THE HAGUE, September 30, 1907.

THEOLOGICAL UNREST IN ENGLAND.

HETERODOX tendencies have become so strong in England, especially under the lead of Rev. R. J. Campbell, that a formidable body of the leaders of the Congregational churches have felt called upon to issue the following statement of doctrine:—

“As men who have been called to the representative post of chairmen of the Union, or as heads of Congregational colleges, we think, in the theological unrest which has invaded the churches, that good may result from making a brief statement of some things, most surely believed among us, which require at the present time emphatic affirmation.

“Our hope is that the statement may not only help those who within our own borders are disturbed by current controversies, but also assure our fellow Christians of other Communion that we hold fast ‘the faith once for all delivered to the saints.’ At the same time we are eager, in the interests of a progressive evangelical theology, to receive all new light and truth which may break forth from the Word.

“1. We believe in the Personality of God the Father, transcendent as Maker and Ruler of all things, and yet, through His eternal Spirit, immanent in the world, and particularly in man and his history.

“2. We believe that sin, so far from being necessary to man’s development, is, as a distrust of God and disobedience to Him, a perversion of the moral and religious nature which, apart from redemption, would involve man in ruin.

“3. We believe that Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, came into the world to reveal the holy love and grace of God, and to redeem man by the sacrifice of Himself once for all upon the Cross for the sin of the world, so conveying to the individual believer the Divine pardon.

"4. We believe that this pardon is appropriated by faith in Jesus Christ, and that by this faith the Holy Spirit, producing union with the living Lord, regenerates human nature to eternal life.

"5. We believe that the regenerate are the true Church to which, among other sacred obligations, is committed the task of transforming the world, morally and socially, into the Kingdom of God.

"6. We believe that the Bible is God's Book, because it enshrines the divine revelation culminating in the historic coming of Christ, His life, death, and resurrection, and the Gospel therein contained.

"7. We believe that all truth is to be received as from God, and that the apparent conflict between science and religion not only can be adjusted, but is at the present time approaching a reconciliation.

"These in our judgment are the points which just now require emphasis.

"Fervently praying for light, for loyalty to truth, and for unflinching charity, we remain,

"Yours faithfully in Christ,

"W. F. ADENEY.

"GEO. S. BARRETT.

"CHAS. CHAPMAN.

"J. COMPTON-RICKETT.

"W. CUTHBERTSON.

"A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

"P. T. FORSYTH.

"ALFRED E. GARVIE.

"A. GOODRICH.

"E. GRIFFITH-JONES.

"ROBT. F. HORTON.

"J. H. JOWETT.

"D. L. RITCHIE.

"J. GUINNESS ROGERS.

"ALFRED ROWLAND.

"CALEB SCOTT.

"ALBERT SPICER.

"H. ARNOLD THOMAS.

"R. W. THOMPSON.

"O. C. WHITEHOUSE."

This brought an immediate response from Mr. Campbell, who perceived at once against whom it was directed. At his lecture the day after, he said:—

"This morning there appears in the Press a manifesto, signed by the chairman and a number of distinguished ex-chairmen of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and also heads of theological colleges. The avowed object of this pronouncement is to allay the present 'theological unrest' in the churches. In this respect it was the counterpart of the Papal Encyclical recently issued against the Modernists, and will prove equally futile.

"The movement against which it is directed cannot be crushed by any such ex-cathedra utterance. Some of the gentlemen who have signed this manifesto have previously tried, after the most approved methods of the Church of Rome, what violent personal abuse could

do; they are even now trying what practical excommunication can do. But they cannot allay the unrest they deplore, for it is of God. It is a shaking of the dry bones in the valley of death. It is the resurgence of faith. It is the revival of Christianity. Great is truth, and it shall prevail."

Later, in an open letter, he says:—

"The general attitude of the controlling official element in the churches is now so plainly hostile to the movement expressed in the New Theology that something will have to be done to safeguard and direct the aspirations of those who have openly professed their adherence to it. Steps have already been taken in various localities by the young people themselves to secure some form of Christian fellowship on the wider lines. This movement is so spontaneous, so virile, and so evidently inspired of God, that I can no longer refrain from acceding to the requests of those who wish me to provide a general center and an active propaganda for it. This will be done without delay.

"Leaders of the New Theology movement will be called together as soon as possible and asked to contribute advice and assistance. An attempt will be made to encourage the formation of local groups or associations of an inter-denominational character which can be federated with a center in London. The wider the basis of membership can be made the better. The theological cannot be separated from the sociological aspect of the movement. The New Theology is simply and solely the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. We may as well begin, therefore, by asserting this firmly and uncompromisingly, and wait for further results."

Simultaneously the situation was so ably discussed in the *Daily Telegraph* (March 4) by "Oxoniensis" that it is worthy of permanent preservation. We are permitted to give it entire.

"A singular importance attaches to the manifesto which was addressed the other day to the Congregational Churches in England and Wales. It is issued in the names of the heads of Congregational Colleges and Chairmen of the Union, and therefore possesses all the authority of a creed as understood by those whom we class vaguely under the general name of Dissenters. A great deal has been said about the 'Nonconformist conscience,' sometimes in praise, sometimes in derision; but we at last know what the Nonconformist conscience ordains, although it must be confessed that some of the

clauses are sufficiently vague to cover a considerable divergence in opinion. But the interesting point is that at last those who have always objected to dogmas are themselves forced to issue dogmas. The Congregational body exists as a protest against the formularies of the Anglican Church, and now, in its turn, it has had to crystallise its views into a more or less definite creed, after the pattern of those Synods of bishops who met in the early centuries of the Christian era. That is in itself a startling fact, even though it must be admitted that it is due to an entirely natural process. The instinct of the liberal mind is always to protest against dogma, and a very large amount of what we call religious reform has proceeded from this revolutionary spirit. Then comes a time when the reformers themselves discover that their principles are stretched beyond their own cognisance or sanction. Some person, or some body of persons, has, to use a convenient vulgarism, 'gone one better' than they have. So the former liberals become conservatives, and intrench their position against the attacks of an adversary, who, nevertheless, is bred out of their own camp. The process of fortification is always the same—the production of a confession of faith, a series of articles enjoined upon the faithful as the very conditions of their membership, and then we are face to face with the central difficulty. To believe is relatively an easy matter, at all events for certain temperaments; but to formulate one's belief is the not easy task of supplying a reasonable basis for an emotion, of providing a logical structure for that which in its primary essence is not understood, but felt.

"CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS.

"There have been a number of confessions of faith in the history of the world, and they have all risen from much the same causes. There was, of course, no creed, in any definite sense of the word, in the early Christian Church. Indeed, it is not till a much later age, the age of Irenæus and Tertullian (175 to 200) that we meet with any definite summaries of belief. But, of course, we must go a great deal later than this before we reach a formularised programme of articles of faith. As every one knows, the first was what we call the Nicene Creed, dating from the early part of the fourth century, a creed which is especially dear to the Eastern Churches. The so-called Apostles' Creed, which the Western Churches adopted, is considerably later. And, last of all, at the very end of the eighth century, we have the Athanasian Creed. The reason for these successive promulgations is the existence of heresy, or else general conditions of religious disturbance and upheaval, such as are likely to upset the faith of the elect. The Nicene Creed, due to a large extent to the initiative of Constantine, was directly aimed against the Arian heresy, and most people are aware of those subtle distinctions and

interminable wranglings engaged in by the Council of Nicæa on the question whether the Second Person in the Trinity was or was not of the same substance as the Father. It was natural for a later age to imagine that the Apostles' Creed was due to the Apostles themselves, each of the several articles being contributed by a single Apostle. But though the Creed itself may have been in existence from the end of the fourth century, there is no historical evidence of its reception until about the middle of the eighth century, a notable characteristic being the doctrines of the descent of Christ into hell, and the communion of saints. In the case of the Athanasian Creed, we have a very wilful perversion of history in the title. Matthew Arnold said that the Creed was due to the Church being for the nonce in a bad temper. As a matter of fact, it was the response of the Christian consciousness in the age immediately following that of Charlemagne; and the imposture, such as it was, which may or may not have taken place with the concurrence of the heads of the Church, was the ascription of so elaborate and detailed an enunciation of the Trinitarian faith to a father of the Church of the fourth century, who had been at least four hundred years in his grave. Perhaps I need hardly refer to the later confessions, which have been especially plentiful in the Reformed Church. The Confession of Augsburg, in 1530, is one of the earliest of these. It expresses with clearness and brevity the doctrine and position of the Lutheran Church. The Confession of Augsburg was answered on the part of the Roman Catholic Communion by the Council of Trent, at the end of 1545. And if we pass over a series of efforts of the Reformed churches from the middle of the sixteenth century onward, we arrive at last to the two definite confessions, the Thirty-nine Articles and the Westminster Confession. The Thirty-nine Articles were originally ten in 1536, then forty-two in 1552, and finally thirty-nine between 1562 and 1571. The Westminster document was the result of the great Puritan agitation in the seventeenth century, and obtained its position of authority in 1690, when Presbyterianism was finally established in Scotland.

“THE NEW THEOLOGY.

“Between the last-mentioned date and the manifesto which was published the other day we know of hardly any document professing to be of the same unique importance. As has been already hinted, the Nonconformist body is in a somewhat peculiar position in reference to the promulgation of definite creeds. Primarily arising from a certain spirit of Antinomianism, or at all events a dislike of accurately-defined dogmas, the Congregational churches at the present day find themselves menaced by a movement which, in their opinion, threatens their position and authority. Matters have been brought

to a head by what is known as the New Theology; and perhaps no single individual has been more the cause of the new confession of faith than the Rev. R. J. Campbell. His recent books form a most illustrative example of what, from one point of view, we might call extreme Antinomianism, or, from another point of view, exceedingly liberal and enlightened thought. He treats with the greatest freedom not only the ordinarily accepted Christian doctrines, but the Holy Scriptures, and especially the New Testament. He imagines, for instance, that the Founder of our faith was, above all, a social reformer. He was, indeed, in Mr. Campbell's view, a precursor of that Socialism which is held to be the next step in our political development. 'The Kingdom of Heaven' of which Christ spoke was not, in Mr. Campbell's opinion, something transcendental, and removed from the conditions of ordinary time and space, but a new social order, which both Christ and His Apostles believed to be capable of formation within a limited period upon the earth. Other 'obiter dicta' of Mr. Campbell may be passed over, in view of the importance of the main position. There are, for instance, certain opinions which he holds with regard to the Meaning of Sin, the Existence of Evil, the Divinity of Christ, the True Meaning of Atonement, and the Doctrine of Immortality, which find various and not always consistent expression in his latest work, 'Christianity and the Social Order.' But the main point is that Christianity is Socialism, and Socialism is Christianity. And here is involved an especial danger, not only for those who dislike the mixing up of politics and religion, but also for those Congregationalists who believe that the sayings of Christ were opposed to Socialistic tenets. Modern Socialism, at all events, in the mouth of some of its exponents, has something to say about the family, about the sanctity of marriage, about the religious consciousness, together with all that it contains and enforces, which it is more than a little difficult to deduce from the language of the Gospels. Moreover—and that is, after all, a point of capital significance—Christianity has hitherto been held to connote a belief in the Divinity of Christ, and anything that throws doubt upon this proposition, anything which seems to say, in the language of Mr. Campbell, that the Founder of our religion was only a teacher in the sense in which the term is applied to other ethical reformers of the world, strikes a vital blow at the very meaning of religion as understood by the Congregational body.

" AMBIGUITY OF DOGMAS.

"This is the origin of the latest Confession of faith, which, however we like to phrase it, is directed against 'freedom,' as the New Theology understands it. Well, it must be confessed that it is an exceedingly difficult task for the Congregational Churches to attempt.

In the first place, those who object to creeds have found it necessary to promulgate a creed; those who dislike formularies have been forced to indite certain formularies of their own. And, in the second place, the Churches which sprang from the principle of freedom have to anathematize a larger illustration and evolution of that very freedom which they were the first to recommend. The difficulty of their position meets us in one of the earliest paragraphs of the Confession. The signatories assert that they hold fast 'the faith once for all delivered to the saints.' The synods of bishops could not do more. 'At the same time,' they continue, 'we are eager, in the interests of a progressive evangelical theology, to receive all new light and truth which may break forth from the Word.' Or, again, 'We believe that all truth is to be received as from God, and that the apparent conflict between science and religion not only can be adjusted, but is at the present time approaching a reconciliation.' There is no little ambiguity about statements like these. With one hand you retain your hold on the faith once delivered to the saints, while you hold out the other hand to enlightened students, who proceed on assumptions diametrically opposed to those of the Early Fathers. Even Mr. Campbell may find a refuge for his much-criticised doctrines in the ample harbourage afforded by such concessions to modern thought. And we notice besides that in the seven articles of the new creed the omissions are quite as significant as the points which are retained. The first two propositions depend for their very meaning on a theory of the formation of the world and the relation of the Creator to it, which is nowhere expounded. If we lay stress on a phrase like 'the Eternal Spirit immanent in the world,' we get to Pantheism. If we separate the Author of the Universe from the Universe He has made, we are in danger of falling into Manichæism. Sin can only be understood in relation to the doctrine of Evil; but, of course, in such a confession as this the latter cannot be explained. Those who sign the document are very anxious, evidently, to avoid any reference to Socialism, and therefore do not define with any accuracy the meaning of such phrases as 'the Kingdom of Heaven.' The Divinity of the Second Member of the Trinity is far more explicitly stated in the Nicene Creed than it is in the latest Confession of Faith, while the doctrine of Atonement, of Messiahship, of the authority of the Bible, of Immortality, are left in a somewhat vague and chaotic condition. Possibly these things cannot be avoided in any creed; but ambiguity is the especial danger of those who, by their very profession, wish to preserve what they find it difficult to define.

" A MORAL.

"There is no particular moral that I am aware of save the necessity of a larger-minded toleration for those who, for whatever reason
Vol. LXV. No. 258 13

son, deale to interpret for themselves in their own way, the meaning of religion. Long ago it was said that all wise men are of the same faith, but what that faith is they very carefully refuse to explain. And the epigram or paradox covers a real truth. But if different men have different interpretations of spiritual truth; if one man will lay stress on external observances, another on definite dogmas, a third on spiritual life—it is neither wise nor possible to provide a sufficiently large or comprehensive set of articles as the summary of Christianity. Just as the slang of one age is the grammar of the next, so it is quite conceivable that the heterodoxy of a certain period may come to something very like orthodoxy in a later period. If this is what is called Antinomianism, it is an Antinomianism which corresponds with the growth of thought and the development of the world. But, possibly, there is another moral. The real mistake may be to seek to identify religion itself with any political or social movement, or with the changing thoughts of men, on such subjects as the meaning of Evil, or the Eternity of Matter. Christianity is rarely at ease in dealing with metaphysical topics. Nor has it helped the Christian faith to be assimilated in turn to the pretensions of despotism, of aristocracy, of commercial oligarchy, of democratic Socialism—the real truth being that the essence of faith is to leaven men's thoughts, and not to produce immediate structural results in society or politics. 'My Kingdom,' said Christ, 'is not of this world.' It is in truth an ideal, such as never was on sea or land, but may still remain as the inspirer of all the noble things that are done within the conditions of time and space."

THE REMOVAL OF ANDOVER SEMINARY.

DR. THOMAS ARNOLD, of Rugby, England, who was probably the foremost educator of his time, has written this remarkable sentence:—

"There is nothing so revolutionary, because there is nothing so unnatural and convulsive to society, as the strain to keep things fixed, when all the world is by the law of its creation in eternal progress; and the cause of all the evils in the world may be traced to that natural but most deadly error of human indolence and corruption, that our business is to preserve and not to improve."

We grant that it is impracticable and dangerous to attempt to keep things always as they now are, and claim that the true problem of life is to make the necessary changes in a sound and wise manner. We need to avoid the extremes of prema-

ture action and undue delay. We are not, therefore, surprised to learn that there is moral and mental unrest in England, neither are we startled by hearing that an original and energetic preacher in London has stirred up ecclesiastical discontent to such a degree that a body of the more conservative English Congregational leaders have united in formulating a brief new creed for the purpose of holding their congregations together against his influence.

There is religious unrest in this country also, and a new illustration of it is brought before us. Just as we go to press we learn that Andover Seminary, an institution founded and endowed a hundred years ago in order to oppose a belief considered at that time to be heretical, has now essentially surrendered to it. The step was taken in the face of the expressed wishes of the main body of the Alumni, and without any proper consultation with them since. The institution thus transferred to Cambridge will be located very near to an avowed Unitarian Seminary, and we are told that the two institutions will be maintained independently of one another. The line of partition between the two must be rather thin, and the control of the time-honored Seminary is practically lost by the fact that no professor in the transplanted institution can be appointed without the approval of the Corporation of Harvard University. Granting that the present controlling officers of the University are true and noble men, who will not misuse their trust for the purpose of depressing the orthodoxy of a seminary which is thus essentially given up to them, it is certain that the institution is blindly surrendered to any body of men who may hold the control of Harvard University in the future. Andover Seminary is now made over to that which Harvard University may become. Honesty is the best policy for a theological seminary as well as for a trader, and a more complete abandonment of vested rights has never been made during the history of American education. Whether or not the Alumni of Andover Seminary will tamely submit to this remains to be seen.

WILLIAM EDWARDS PARK.