

into the historic mould of past centuries, yet on prudential grounds it would be wiser to say nothing at all. "When we consider," says President Patton, in discussing this question, "the danger of unsettling opinions, of disturbing old anchorages, of being obliged, when the work begins, of going further than we intended, it is better to act upon the maxim, *Quieta non movere*." Everyone must admire the ability and Christian tolerance with which this learned theologian sustained his part in the recent discussions of our sister Church in the United States, but even the weight which attaches to his name can scarcely be used as an argument for giving up the whole subject. Though I cannot oppose my own limited experience to that of President Patton, it has led me to conclude that it is a far more disastrous thing—and disastrous to the faith too—to have a paralysis of thought than its freest possible exercise, provided there is a real desire to find the truth. Supposing it were better that this discussion had not arisen, which remains to be proved, it is too late to stop it now. Some foolish things are sure to be said on both sides, but they will hurt nobody. We had better meet the whole question without needless anxiety, even though we cannot predict what the end may be. The value of the non-disturbance doctrine depends altogether upon what you propose to disturb. "If an offence come out of the truth," said Saint Jerome long ago, "better is it that the offence come than that the truth be concealed.

While some incidents of theological controversy plainly show that one does not waste his time in making a place for the fullest freedom of discussion, the preceding remarks are not intended in the present article to pave the way for a radical attack upon the Westminster Confession. It may be a negative kind of virtue, but like most of the writers who preceded me, I am free to confess that I have no particular ground of quarrel with it. Nor do I think that the desire for revision, however great or small it may be, springs from any wide-spread revolt from the general current of its teaching. And herein lies the weak point in the case of the revisionists, that they are not quite agreed as to what it is desirable to revise, or the best way in which to do it. This was to be expected not only because the revisionists are unwilling to lay violent hands upon the Church's symbol, but because it is always much easier to criticize than to amend, easier to feel an objection than to state it in a concrete form which shall meet with general approval.

Accordingly it has been said that, under these circumstances, the objections to the Confession must be rather visionary, and that until the disaffected