

asks that the science of that name, sometimes described as 'orthodox,' be required to show cause why it should not abdicate in favor of another claimant." This expression of a recent writer in *The Century* magazine describes the noteworthy fact that a battle between new and old is raging along the whole line of thought. In pure science we have two chemistries contrasted as new and old; in that mixed region, where science meets life, we have the old and the new political economy confronting each other.

In the same way we find the contrast of old and new running into theology. There is the new theology fighting for its life, as this writer describes it, and the old claiming, in the same way, to be "orthodox," simply because it is old.

We should begin by setting aside such question-begging phrases as "old" and "new." They prejudge the very point in question. After all said, neither novelty nor antiquity supply any just criterion of truth. Some minds are Athenian, and ever on the look-out for something new. Others are Asiatic in their reverence for the past; their laws must be like those of the Medes and Persians, which alter not.

But the temperament which is most averse to truth is that which, Tertullian-like, calls in prescription as the short and easy mode of disposing of a new opinion. It is enough that it is new, to lead them to pronounce that it cannot be true. The current tradition of the doctors of the Church was against it; therefore, it is out of court. This is that abuse of the argument of authority which the New Theology has most to fear from.

The true childish mind of the East, cradled in authority, rocked in a blind reverence for antiquity, may be passed by. It is as remote from the modern mind as the East is far from the West. But it is the keen and lawyer-like intellect of a Roman rhetorician, such as Tertullian, which we have to complain of.

It was this Veuillot of his day, this self-chosen champion of orthodoxy, this layman, more cleric than the clericals, who set up authority as a bar to inquiry, and appealed to an antiquity of a century or so as a prescription against any aspect of truth with a fresher gloss of novelty than that which he held. "Tertullian," it has been well observed, "was a lawyer before his conversion to Christianity, and the legal attitude is everywhere apparent in his writings. He was always the advocate, holding, as it were, a brief for Christianity, as he understood it; not concerned so much for the truth as for overthrowing the adversaries that rose up against it. From this point of view, the Church's faith was its property, and the aim of heresy was to weaken the Church's sense of security arising from long possession. Hence the receipt of dealing with the heretics was the legal argument that the Church had a presumption in its favor, springing from long