

Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth—when the wood is dry. An obscure presbytery send to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, North, an overture asking for a revision of the Confession of Faith. The Assembly got rid of the overture by sending down to Presbyteries the two simple questions, "Do you want revision?"—and—"What changes do you wish?" These two questions have raised a din such as the Church courts and papers in the United States have not heard for many a day before. Secular papers too, look on and occasionally take a part, shewing frequently a lack of knowledge of the Confession of Faith and its teachings that would at least entitle them to the privilege of remaining silent.

Elders too, and even ministers in some cases shew by their addresses that their knowledge of that venerable book is obtained from other sources than careful study of its contents. The expressions of opinion are of all grades, from the blind conservative who worships the Confession and would regard as profane the hand that touched it, and the intelligent conservative who believes that while there are things in it hard to be understood, yet it sets forth fairly and fully the teaching of the Word of God upon the great doctrines of our holy religion, from these, downward, through all stages of iconoclasm to the men who want a creed elastic enough to embrace almost every kind of teaching that any type of Christian consciousness, or rather human consciousness may desiderate.

In the agitation for review there are a few thoughts that it may be well to remember, viz:—

1. That truth, in so far as it has to do with religion, is from God and not of men.
2. That a creed or confession to be true must set forth the mind of God as revealed in His word and not the fancies or wishes of men.
3. That in formulating a creed the aim must not be to get a system of doctrine that can be preached with acceptance to the na-

tural heart, but one that will reflect the mind of God.

4. Hence the question in discussion should be, not, will this conciliate men, but, does it fairly represent the teaching of the Word of God. If men choose to object to the doctrine of the Word of God then the quarrel is between them at the Word.

5. That a Confession of Faith that reflects the Word and Mind of God will never please unregenerate man. "The carnal heart is enmity against God for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." One mark of a confession or creed that would reflect faithfully the mind of God would be that men who are not Christians at heart would object to it. Of creeds as of men, it may be said, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you."

6. That whatever be the issue we need not fear. The Church of Christ in this century approaches more nearly the Apostolic Church than it has done in any other age, in obeying the last command of the Saviour, "Go preach the Gospel to every creature." The promise is, "if any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine." And it cannot be that the Church of Christ in carrying out as never before since apostolic times His will in the evangelization of the world will be left to wander far astray in doctrine.

7. That whatever mystery there may be as to the relation between God's purposes and man's free will, we can safely leave it for God himself to solve. The mystery has nothing whatever to do with our duty. "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children that we may keep all the words of this law," Deut. 29:29. The secret things are the mysteries of His own plans and purposes. These belong to Him. The things that are revealed are His commands and promises. These are for us to obey and to claim and they are so simple and plain that the wayfaring man through a fool need not err therein.

One of the heroes of African Missions worthy to be ranked with Moffat and Livingstone is Mr. McKay, son of Rev. Alex-