

to it. It is exceedingly popular and secures a man credit for being *broad* and *liberal*. More than once have we heard men fulminating against dogmas, creeds, ritual and ecclesiastical machinery, asserting that love is of greater importance than these things, and leaving the impression if they did not state it in words that the latter are of no consequence. They are wont to tell us that practice is of more account than doctrine : that life is more essential than creed as though the churches generally taught the opposite. They delight to picture the churches as more concerned about infinitesimal points of faith than matters of character and duty. It matters little, they say, what we believe, but, a great deal what we are—mercy is more important than sacrifice.

Now without questioning for a moment the premises laid down, we confess we are somewhat at a loss to see how their conclusion is deducible therefrom. Granting that mercy is preferable to sacrifice it does not follow that sacrifice is useless or baneful and can be ignored at will. If this be logic we are prepared to admit ignorance of its first principles with no burning desire either to be initiated therein.

It is surprising the number of illbalanced creatures there are in the world, men who can see but one aspect of truth, who are continually taking the part for the whole and falling into hopeless error as a consequence. They get hold of one idea and are blind to everything else. They must be either at one pole or the other. They can stop at no middle point. Because one thing is better than another thing they conclude that that other is of no consequence at all. Because the spirit is more essential than the letter they infer that this may therefore be discarded. Because love, truth and justice are of greater moment than forms and dogmas they reason that these latter may be ignored. Because mercy is preferable to sacrifice, they conclude that sacrifice is non essential if not positively harmful.

As well might we reason that since the key stone is the crown of the arch, therefore it is all that is needful to constituted an arch ; that since the framework of a house is of no worth unless sheeted in with proper materials, therefore a framework is useless and can be dispensed with in building. Yet such reasoning is in no wise more absurd than many employ and act upon in spiritual things. These people seem to take it for granted that mercy and sacrifice cannot exist together, that they are hostile to each other and mutually destructive. Now we should like to ask, what necessary antagonism