

least the following leading attributes in the form of departure from the religion of Jesus as primitively taught—

First, An undue elevation of the ministerial or official function, or if we will understand each other better, an unscriptural degree of clerical authority.

Second, A godless union of religion and politics by authority of the state, or what we may call church-and-state-ism.

Third, A nullification of God's word, by councils, creeds, and ecclesiastical courts, ultimating in a mixture of humanisms with the pure inspired text—a mixture which was and is received into the popular faith as implicitly as if the whole were of divine obligation; in other words, a practical rejection of the Bible through the subtle introduction of human teaching.

From the fourth to the sixth century, apostacy steadily increases, and now the Mother of Harlots takes her seat and rules among the nations. Her charms and enchantments enslave the civilized world. She dictates, imprisons, tortures, kills. Cruelties are sport, and death a smiling delight. Her feet trample the neck of kings, and her nod prostrates emperors. The dark ages attest her power and character; and terribly awful is the spectacle of cruelty, iniquity, and tyranny these gloomy ages disclose.

The opening of the 16th century brings the well-marked dawn of light and liberty. The reformatory flame that then burst over the chief nations of Europe, had been kindled previously in England, Scotland, and Germany by such men as Wickliffe, Knox, Jerome, and Huss. But it was not until the brighter rays of Luther, Melancthon, Zwingle and Calvin met and commingled, that anything worthy of the name of reformation was effected. And here, almost immediately, a new feature in the history of the apostacy is brought to view. The old parent Lady, the mother of sects, as well as of proscription and tyranny, has the comfort of being a Queen of queens, and is consoled in her decline by a daughterly family of sects which arise and aspire to parental independency with improvements. Forthwith we have Luthernism in Germany; Presbyterianism in Scotland; Episcopacy in England; and Calvinism distributed in greater or less portions among them. The sect-spirit now fairly developed, sects multiply with the progress of the times; so that three hundred years have given us more than two hundred different sects.

Creeds therefore produce creeds, and these again in turn produce other creeds, until the great Mistress of sects is scarcely able to keep