

negative conceptions, and also with regard to those final issues of the creation which the God of the Bible has not chosen clearly to disclose to us in this period of our mental and moral education."

On the whole, therefore, judging from a careful consideration of these memorable occasions, there does not seem to be any ground for the frequent assertion of a "drift among Congregationalists" towards Universalist doctrines.

As something of the Council system is rightly making its way among ourselves, we would indicate a tendency among our brethren of the United States towards inquisitorialness which we deprecate. That the rights of fellowship may be conserved, and that the intrusion of adventurers and ecclesiastical fugitives into our pulpits, may be minimized, the spirit, if not the form, of the council system must be observed, but we have no sympathy with an inquisitorial prying into the bye-paths of a man's religious conviction. There should be, is, a basis of fellowship, an honest man's statement of the acceptance of the same suffices us until he shall have given grounds for believing he has receded therefrom, then, on expostulation, it is competent and right that we should avowedly withdraw the fellowship whose basis has been departed from.

LET it be noticed in *re* Councils, that it is desirable that churches be invited. A council of pastors, save as they are representatives of their churches, is not Congregational—the church element should not be forgotten. If we may, for convenience sake, use a distinction we have little ecclesiastical faith in, we want the laity fairly represented.

REGARDING the new statements of old perplexities, the Boston *Congregationalist* has some pertinent remarks. It reminds its readers that from the days of Abraham until now the unswerving conviction of the Church of God has habitually expressed itself in the confident affirmation which is latent to the question: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" And when pressed with the practical questions: What will become of infants and idiots, and any pagans and others—if any there be—who may not, to human eye, seem

to "have a fair chance" under those providential conditions which ordinarily apply in this world, the old divines have, invariably solved the problem by affirming their pure and perfect trust, that, *in some way*, God will be absolutely just with all. Calvin [*Institutes*, IV. x:i. 18] says:

We confess, indeed, that the word of the Lord is the only seed of spiritual regeneration; but we deny the inference that, therefore, the power of God cannot regenerate infants. This is as possible and easy for Him as it is wondrous and incomprehensible to us. *It were dangerous* [non satis tutum fuerit hoc alimere Domino, ne sese illis quoquo modo exhibere cognoscendum queat] *to deny that the Lord is able to furnish them with the knowledge of Himself in any way He pleases.*

We see nothing more truly broad in the "advanced" statement of Dr. Newman Smyth before the Council that if incidentally in the development of God's purposes of grace under the limitations of a system of nature, sufficient conditions of gracious probation may not have been furnished to this world to any particular generation, class or individual (as, for example, infants, idiots, antediluvians, some heathen and children born apparently to no moral chance) I can [we must] *trust God to provide for such some special opportunity for repentance in hades before the final judgment.*

Of course there is something in the art of putting things, but the thing that is put does not seem when sifted to be any clearer under the new, than under the old.

WE clip the following from the Boston *Congregationalist*, wondering whether we have to go abroad to find home news. The letter from the respected secretary of our college which appears in our pages this month, was taken out of the Post Office at the same time as the *Congregationalist* from which this item is taken. "A report that can hardly fail to be authentic comes from Portland, to the effect that Dr. H. M. Storrs was there visited by a deputation from Montreal, representing also interested English friends of the Congregational Theological Seminary connected with McGill University, urging his acceptance, on an ample salary, of the presidency and professorship of Systematic Theology in that institution. A new, substantial building is to be erected at once, and the