

at the negative side of our Faith and Order ; to consider their bearing on this question. We may say then that we do not believe in a universal, apostolic, infallible Church ; though we have a good deal to say about apostolic Churches. We do not "swear in the words of a master ;" for one is our master even Christ. We do not impose upon others nor accept ourselves, any inflexible, "ironclad" creed. We have less uniformity, though we claim perhaps more substantial unity than many of the denominations. Our agreement is not of the letter that killeth, but of the spirit that giveth life—not so much in forms, words, and names which lead to logomachy, schism, and all uncharitableness, as in faith, hope, and love. The right to differ which we claim, we allow ; and where any leave our communion, we dismiss them with the apostolic benediction, instead of pronouncing upon them the greater or "lesser" excommunication. In short, we seek to carry out the apostolic axiom, "whereto we have attained to walk by the same rule and mind the same things," believing that "if in anything we be otherwise minded, God will reveal this unto us." We hold that God has yet "much light to break" to His Church, from His word. We would as soon therefore think of going back to the vulgate for our Bible, or to the prayer book of a century ago, for our worship, as to the reformation for our creed ; our theology may thus be designated moderate and modern. That is, whilst the truths themselves are old as the Apostolic age and inspired records, the terminology in which they clothe themselves is no antique garb or ancient habit. In proportion as the tree strikes its root down into the past, it will throw its branches aloft towards the future. But in order to this, it is evident we must have as our religions teachers, to state and defend the truth, "scribes instructed unto the Kingdom, to bring forth out of the treasure things new and old."

Without this we had better confine ourselves to "glittering generalities." Our part of the Church militant would better keep to their entrenchments ; and not adventure into the open field to fight for the truth. In retreating to the high doctrines of the past, we would then only imitate the tactics of a wary general who in face of a formidable enemy would naturally retire to some mountain range in the rear. Ideas, to clothe themselves in fresh and appropriate phraseology must be the live ideas of live men. A modern nomenclature, popular phraseology, and ecclesiastical independence, are safe only when intelligent.

The need of an educated ministry is further evident when we consider our distinctive polity and order of worship ; our ministers by ordination are not introduced to a priestly caste. They are not supposed to be invested with a clerical *status* or sacerdotal power, to dispense grace from their hands that shall operate as a charm. They are not empowered to "lord it over God's heritage." They have simply official leadership. Their authority depends on weight of character, personal worth, and spiritual power. As Dr. Lyman Beecher so pithily prayed for the civil rulers of his day—that they might be men the people could respect, we need, to "rule well" in the Church, men respectable at least in point of intelligence. The more is this necessary as the idea of the pastorate is a permanent relation—a life work, whose object is not ritualistic or emotional, but to feed the flock with understanding and knowledge. To induct men into this office therefore "who cannot teach and will not learn," is to commit a double wrong—one that affects alike pastor and people.

An educated ministry is imperatively demanded also by the character of the age. It is an educated age. Even unbelief is intelligent. I am, I trust, as far from being an alarmist as an optimist ; I do not assert that "modern infidelity" is more formidable than the ancient ; but this I do assert, that the infidelity which is now formidable, is educated. It does not merely sport profane jests, or string together Scripture difficulties. It assumes to speak with authority. It assaults the foundations. It intermeddles with all knowledge. It would be sad if at such a juncture the Church resembled the Israelites at that crisis of their history, when they had not a shield or spear amongst thousands, when their enemies were well furnished with weapons of war.