

against a minister who affirms, and in his teaching makes manifest, his faith in "the incarnation, the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, His resurrection, His ascension and mediatorial reign and the work of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of men." Taking the Congregational ministry as a whole, I believe, without reserve, that it holds these spiritual facts and doctrines in the grasp of an intelligent and masculine faith. That in the searching times through which we have been passing a few have drifted from their moorings is notorious; but the number is fractional, and they have not been able to find a resting-place in the ministry of our churches. A few have been bewildered for a time, but patient waiting upon God on their own part and a patient dealing with them on the part of their brethren have restored to them calm and strong faith. This unsettlement is not distinctive of the Congregational ministry nor peculiar to this generation; and, so far as I know, it is a libel on the Congregational churches and ministry to assert that it is characteristic of their present state. I believe it less affects them than it did ten years ago.

OUR good friend Dr. Stevenson has a calm, Christianlike letter in a late issue of the *Christian World*, criticising the attack made lately by Mr. Spurgeon on the ministers who differ from him on what may broadly be termed the old Calvinistic orthodoxy. The letter is much too long for THE INDEPENDENT, and scarcely permits of epitomizing, but it refutes the idea that the Word of God is less revered, the truth less conscientiously taught, because it is put in a form differing from that in which Mr. Spurgeon would put it. The letter goes further, and claims that the "liberal aspect of the Gospel is not to be confessed as a sin or mourned as an apostasy," and "there is not a more active or more earnest church in London than that over which it is my honour to preside; yet, how it was founded and trained in liberality of sentiment all men know?" Mr. Spurgeon had charged that the presentation of the doctrines of Christianity in the liberal spirit had the result, at any rate, intended or not, of increasing the popularity of the preacher. To this Dr. Stevenson spiritedly replies:

As to the more liberal Gospel advancing one's popularity, I simply repudiate the statement, as not only untrue but impossible. There never was a new aspect of doctrine yet that did not win its way to acceptance through the pain and dispute of those who taught it. And will any one say that a doctrine has been the stepping-stone to outward success which deposed Campbell from the ministry, made Robertson's life a tragedy of persecution, and caused the name even of Arthur Stanley, among the most amiable and spiritual of men, to be cast out as evil among two-thirds of the church to which he belonged?

A further charge was that the tendency of such preaching was to make unbelievers, a charge that years ago was brought against one of the greatest of our preachers and the noblest of men, a man who was the instrument under God of saving probably more young men from shipwreck on the rocks of infidelity than any other contemporary. To this Dr. Stevenson replies:

As to making unbelievers, I have only to say that many have thanked me, and many have thanked other preachers of like mind, for saving them from an unbelief brought on by the lurid and ghastly doctrines to which they have listened.

Mr. Spurgeon is a great, a grand man, but he does not know all truth; the mantle of infallibility has not been bestowed upon him, and it is to be feared that the violent attacks he is now making upon his brethren will undo much good that he has been blessed of God to accomplish.

WHY will the English ministers of our body who visit Canada ignore the churches here, and give their aid to other bodies, generally the Methodist? It looks very much as if they were ashamed of their "poor relations" in the Dominion, and went where they could preach to the biggest crowds or—could command the most money! Newman Hall a year or two ago did so, and now Dr. Parker has followed the same course; it may be that they put themselves into the hands of agents, and are moved about like chessmen on a board, but surely in a matter of such a character they might have some thought of those of like ecclesiastical preferences, and rejoice to identify themselves with them. The complaint is sometimes made, and not without reason, that people coming to this country often do not bring with them anything to show their church connection, and drift with the current to anywhere, but can it be wondered at with the examples set by popular English preachers?

PLYMOUTH CHURCH, Brooklyn, has invited—not Dr. Parker—but Rev. C. Berry, of Wolverhampton, England, to succeed Mr. Beecher. Mr. Berry is comparatively young, has made full proof of his ministry, is liberal in religion and in politics active, and of great mental power, though comparatively small in stature. The acceptance is as yet not given. There is a prevailing opinion that Mr. Berry will worthily fill Mr. Beecher's place.