

they are not God's ways of managing the affairs of His Kingdom, we are not permitted to adopt them as a *normal and permanent* state of things in our Churches. As temporary expedients in newly organised or weak Churches, they may be found both convenient and necessary as a sort of scaffolding by which to set up the perfect temple. It was in this way, we believe, that the evil first crept unwares into the Church; but as no one thinks of keeping up scaffolding after his house is built and completed, so we see no reason why temporary expedient should be perpetuated by the Church after its Scriptural form has been, or may be, perfected. In regard to existing arrangements, it may not at all times be possible to bring them into accord with the principles of the Church, and in such instances forbearance must be exercised, but we know one of the most stubborn of the old Erastian managements which by mutual arrangement has been quite neutralised; and we believe, that with men of piety and wisdom to deal with, every such unscriptural and unpresbyterian order of things might be brought into peaceful conformity with the Word of God, and the Constitution of our noble Church. ✕

MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS BELIEF. *R. F. Burr*

More than a quarter of a century has passed since, in his splendid Inaugural Discourse as Lord Rector of Glasgow University, Lord Brougham gave utterance to the sentiment: "That man shall no more render account to man for his belief, over which he has himself no control. Henceforth, nothing shall prevail upon us to praise or to blame any one for that which he can no more change than he can the hue of his skin, or the height of his stature." The infidel fraternity eulogise the sentiment. In every variety of form they echo it.

Strange, that his Lordship, with all his versatility of talent, failed to see that the principle thus enunciated was entirely at variance with his practice—that if carried out, it would have stultified his whole course as a statesman and judge. No one ever rated his political opponents more severely for the principles they held and the policy they pursued. The elegant Canning, and a host of other antagonists, writhed beneath the lash he so unsparingly applied. But, apart from the score of courtesy, how unjust and ungenerous such treatment on his part, considering that the victims of his fiery epithets were virtually irresponsible, that they merited neither praise nor blame, since they could not change their opinions any more than their "hue" or their "height." And when discharging his judicial function, how could he be so cruel as to pronounce sentence on culprits who deserved to be pitied rather than punished?

This, we are persuaded, is a piece of flimsy sophistry which no man durst utter, and which would not be listened to for a moment in connection with any other subject than that of religion. It would be condemned in the senate and at the bar; it would be drowned in the tumult of the exchange and the market place. Common sense and a regard to worldly interests would rise to hoot down the traitor. Nothing more than this is requisite to undermine the foundation of all religious belief and morals, to let open the floodgates of immorality, and to make the restraints of religion like the brittle flax or the yielding sand. In opposition to such latitudinarianism we maintain, that man is responsible for the dispositions which he cherishes, for the opinions which he holds and avows, and for his habitual conduct. This is going the whole length of Scripture, but no further, which affirms that every one of us must give account of himself to God. And this meets with a response from amid the elements of man's moral nature which sets to its seal that the theory is true!