

First among the expressed objections it is said :

(1.) That church creeds are hostile to individual liberty, and oppressive.

(2.) That creeds are *useless*, because it is no matter what we believe inwardly, if we only act right outwardly.

(3.) That church creeds are, in many cases, inconsistent with each other and with truth.

(4.) That church creeds check improvement by fixing and fossilizing religious beliefs.

(5.) That belief in creeds and not virtuous conduct is made a condition of church fellowship and of final salvation.

(6.) That belief in any creed is neither rewardable nor punishable—that is, it has no moral quality ; for belief of demonstrated truth can have no merit, because it is necessary ; and disbelief of undemonstrated truth can have no demerit, because it, too, is necessary.

The suppressed objections against creeds may be stated as follows :

(1.) That religious or theological truth is not infallibly known, has no solid basis of certitude on which a creed may be founded.

(2.) Orthodox Christianity can best be abolished by abolishing the orthodox churches ; and the orthodox churches can best be abolished by abolishing the creeds on which, as a doctrinal basis, these churches are founded.

To meet these objections, we propose to show that the use of church creeds is innocent, rational, scriptural and necessary.

Here we remark that the opposition is not so much against a particular creed, as “creeds” or “dogmas” in general. They may affirm or even prove that a certain