

But the notion that, whilst science is virgin soil, the field of theology is exhausted, though it enjoys extensive popularity, is nothing but a prejudice and a delusion. The truth is, the work of theology, so far from being exhausted, is at present terribly in arrear. The progress of thought in other departments of human interest has brought to the front many questions of great importance which are awaiting replies ; but, in the meantime, within the Church speculation is in a far from vigorous condition. The Church is occupied with different work. After generations of torpor she has awakened to an overwhelming sense of her duty to apply the Gospel to the life of the population at home and to carry it to the heathen abroad. The instrumentalities for giving effect to these impulses have been so multiplied, that every congregation is a hive of activities, which it requires the whole time and strength of the minister to direct. Even the professors in our colleges are tempted aside from their proper work to absorb themselves in all kinds of benevolent enterprises.

In some ways this state of things is gratifying, for these are signs of revived spiritual life. But meantime the work of speculation languishes and the unanswered questions accumulate, to the world's perplexity and the Church's danger. William Ames, a godly and orthodox divine of a former age, once well known, but now, I fear, nearly forgotten, says in his great work on *Conscience*, that in his day also the same thing took place ; under the reviving breath of the Spirit of God evangelistic activity prevailed, the best spirits giving themselves entirely up to it ; and, whilst this was regarded as the body of the Church's duty, the toil of thought and speculation was valued only as the body's smaller members. But, says he, it turned out that these small members were the fingers and toes of the body ; and without fingers and toes the hands and feet came to be of little use ; and without hands and feet the body threatened to become a helpless log, tossed on the currents of the thought of the time. As in the building of the new Jerusalem, he continues, they handled the sword with one hand, while they built the wall with the other, so must evangelistic activity and sacred speculation go hand in hand, if the Church is to be in a healthy state and equal to her whole duty.

This is a true testimony. Through exclusive preoccupation with even the highest work, the Church may expose herself to