

might say "yes," and the other say "no," and both be right, from their own standpoint. The man might be an atheist, and so be an infidel to one ; but be faithful to any trust he undertook, and thus not be an infidel to the other.

Many discussions of the day, on all subjects, arise not so much from differing thoughts, as from a careless use of words. Sir William Hamilton well says in his *Logic*, "So copious a source of error is the ambiguity of language that a very large proportion of human controversy has been concerning the sense in which certain terms should be understood ; and many disputes have even been fiercely waged in consequence of the disputants being unaware that they agreed in opinion, and only differed in the meaning they attached to the words in which that opinion was expressed."

What we want, therefore, in the first place, is correct definition, so that every important word shall have a definite meaning ; and a meaning in which all agree, in order that it shall convey the same thought to all who use it. There are, of course, perils in definition, especially with reference to religious dogmas ; the peril, for example, of suggesting that all the significance of the word is contained within the definition, or of limiting thought by the assumption that the definition is final. These perils are, however, reduced to a minimum when it is remembered that the main object of definition is to aid uniformity and precision in the expression of thought.

Real definition should be adequate ; the subject defined and the predicate defining being equivalent, or of the same extension ; it should be precise, giving nothing unessential or superfluous ; it should be also perspicuous, the terms should be intelligible and not figurative. A few illustrations will suffice to show the logical incorrectness of definitions in current phraseology on subjects scientific or philosophic, and the absolute necessity for doing something to reduce the present chaos to order. This is necessary in the interests of theology, because there cannot be any line of thought that does not somewhere cross our beliefs regarding God, the soul, and hereafter.