

for the opposite reason—that, so far as Toronto is concerned, no such tendency is visible,—much to the loss of our Presbyterian friends. We are gratified, however, to have the rev. doctor's testimony that, generally speaking, not only among Presbyterians, but Baptists and other Protestant denominations, "this tendency to rationalize and rid itself of all that is supernatural * * * is supplanting in popular teaching the stern orthodoxy of former days."

This year's May meeting of the Unitarian Conference of the Middle States and Canada, which has just been held in Washington, D.C., seems to have been of more than usual interest. The sermon was preached by Rev. Robert Collier of New York, and the program of subjects for papers and discussions included "How to instruct Young People in the Right Use of the Bible," by Rev. S. R. Calthrop of Syracuse, "The American Unitarian Association and its work," by Rev. Grindall Reynolds of Boston, "The Southern Opportunity," by Rev. G. L. Chaney of Atlanta, Ga., "Good Citizenship," by Rev. Joseph May of Philadelphia, "The Ideal Church," by Rev. W. H. Johnson, of Wilmington, Del., and "The Progressive Church: what it should do," one phase of which was assigned to Rev. James C. Hodgins. We regret that we are unable this month to present more than this outline of the proceedings.

The Pulpit.

MINOT J. SAVAGE.

As through the thickest battle onward leads
The fighting host some great and valiant soul,
Nor recks of loss or gain, but forward fares;
So leads us in the van of human thought
This strong-armed Hector o'er the moving field;
Nor pause nor fear he knows, but ever on,
And wields his sword and casts the gleaming lance,
While smaller men grow mighty at his back,
And high above the conflicts sounds his voice
That onward calls the host to Truth and God.
—O. R. Washburn.

THE COMING RELIGION.

BY REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE, OF BOSTON.

All thinking persons are conscious of disturbance in the religious world: that doubt, as well as a larger faith, is abroad in the land. But, being themselves in the disturbance, it is not easy to see the possible outcome. Now what is going on? What is to be the result?

Let me first take up points that trouble people as they face this question. Many think that the Bible is threatened, that the disturbers do not wish to accept God's truth. Is it any opposition to the Bible that is inspiring the new work? Is Dr. Abbott or Dr. Briggs an enemy of the Bible?

No: it needs to be noted squarely that the advocates of the new thought are not opposing the Bible in any way. We do oppose the theory that the Bible is a book with no mistakes in it of any sort. We do not accept that theory; and, note, the Bible makes no such claim. What we refuse to be bound by, then, are theories that very fallible men have made up about it. The whole controversy is here: it is no question of the acceptance of the law of God, but the question among earnest men of what the Bible is.

Again, there is an impression that the new movement threatens Jesus. The whole question as to the person of Jesus is as to what he was, that we may find the truth about him. Modern thought opposes certain myths and legends and dogmatic beliefs—two-thirds Greek and Roman, nearly wholly pagan—which grew up gradually through three hundred years, until they culminated in the fourth century in the Trinity. We are trying to find the truth about Jesus, and the truth must ever be diviner than any falsehood, however hoary.

Another thought: There is a feeling that, as a result of the modern movement, the foundation of ethics is shaken. Let me refer to the saying of a famous Roman Catholic writer, Mr. Lilly, in an article in an English review, that, if all the religions on the face of the earth were wiped out of existence, not one single moral principle would be touched or changed. And I agree with him, because the principles of right and wrong are inherent in the nature of things. No religion ever originated a single ethical idea. These principles are not originated: they are discovered. Is religion in any danger? The people who talk as though it were show they do not comprehend what religion means. Religion is the eternal relation between the individual soul and God. The essence of religion is there: theories about it may pass away.

We need not tremble, then; lest any important truth is in danger while this discussion goes on. Religion cannot pass away.

What is it, then, that is going on? Why, the most hopeful thing in all the world. Humanity is growing, that is all. Humanity needs a new theory, as a child needs new clothing; and the new garments of thought must be more grand, more adequate to the increased stature of the world. It is as if a sprouting acorn should be pitied by its smooth, unbroken fellows, because of the broken shell which is the promise of the oak.

Why, friends, if we ever grow any, the old must be left behind; and that is all that is taking place. It is not a period of infidelity that is sweeping over the world, but a flood of God's new light.

Let me now hint to you, if I may, the outlines of what I believe to be the truth that shall come of the present discussion.

First, we are coming into the thought of a new universe home, adequate to our dream of an infinite God. The universe of the Bible was a three-