

with a judgment as free from prejudice as possible, in order that we may get at the truth concerning them and learn the lessons which they may teach us.

The two great principles which lie at the root of the subject are:

1st. The fact that any such separation and concerted action must have been brought about by some cause, sufficiently important to produce it.

2nd. That this cause must exist in the relation of the teaching and practice of the church to the faith and spiritual life of those who leave her.

In laying down these principles I am by no means making little of the personalities and extraordinary influence of the men who have headed these movements, nor am I, on the other hand, implying that the church has been always and wholly to blame for the loss which she has sustained.

Men of great power have led where many have followed, often no doubt, through restlessness and unstable character. But it may be safely asserted that no movement can continue which has not an enduring cause. Personal influence alone is quite limited, and must soon cease to make itself felt unless its power be exerted in the direction of forms of an enduring character, already in operation. The new field must have pasture in it or the flock will soon leave it, no matter how strong the leader may be who broke through the fence. *And that pasture must be of a kind which the flock need and which they did not find in the old field.*

As illustration of this general statement I name two bodies which represent divergent and almost antagonistic tendencies—the *Plymouth Brethren* and the *Salvation Army*.

These two bodies form typical examples of the question. They both hold themselves as entirely separate from the church as an organization. Indeed it would not be going too far to say that they declare themselves as embodying in their existence a condemnation of her practice if not of her form and organization.

Each of these bodies, therefore, afford an example without any prejudicial or unfair estimate on our part, of what I have called sporadic or extra ecclesiastical religious movements. It is their desire, their glory to be so esteemed. On the other hand