

with the advance movement in theology. Nothing could be more superficial and ill-informed than this assumption. The tendency of the times, theologically, is toward a complete reconstruction of theology along the lines of a new science, a new interpretation, and a new conception of human life. Yet, in a very real sense, the "New Theology" is not new, for it has in it elements that are as old as the Ante-Nicene Fathers—as old, indeed, as human thought and aspiration. It is in important particulars, older than the "Old Theology," for much of the latter does not date back of the fourth Christian century. From one point of view the "New Theology" is a revolt from the long tyranny of the Latin Theology, and a reversion to the vital principles of the early Greek-Christian thought. From another point of view, it is a protest against the despotism of all systems of theological thought that are based, and are now with increasing clearness seen to be based, on a crude idea of revelation, a partial and defective exegesis, an *a priori* logic, and an inadequate apprehension of human nature. From still another point of view, it is an attempt to construct a theology that shall accord with the most spiritual deliverances of the Christian consciousness, and shall be adequate to all the facts of history and life.

Certain characteristics of current Christian life and thought are full of suggestion. Some of these may be briefly noted:

(1) There is an increasing *frankness* in the utterance of religious conviction. Dissent from long-established standards is less and less subjected to the imputation of dishonesty or antagonism to religion. There is a growing feeling that truth is not a delicate and costly treasure which chiefly requires to be guarded from profane contact, but a continent to be explored and possessed by every sincere mind. Doubt is ceasing to be considered criminal, and is therefore becoming more serious and honest; and, instead of being a weight to paralyze endeavor, is becoming a stimulant to deeper inquiry. Much of the thought that is now finding utterance has long been working in the minds of Christian ministers; but till a time within the memory of men in middle life, frankness in speech on theological themes, unless the speech accorded with conventional orthodoxy was sufficient to call forth from many quarters vociferous charges of "heresy," "infidelity," and "treachery." The fear, not altogether a base fear, that put the ban of silence on many lips is dying out. A courage rooted in the developing sense of individual liberty, as well as in an enlarging conception of God and the world, is springing up. And, as victorious science makes fresh conquests from "the ancient realm of night," and discloses new and undreamed of riches of knowledge, "thought leaps forth to wed with fact," and hopes and ideas long stifled find voice.

(2) With the growing frankness of utterance, there is revealing