

great text for ministers, 'The talk of the lips tendeth only to penury'—that is, it shallows the spirit within."

Turning now from the mere position of the minister, let us take a glance at the man who fills the position. He is expected and required to be an educated man, thoroughly, broadly educated. Years are spent in pursuits purely intellectual and literary. Other years are passed in work upon what may be called the literary side of his calling—in the study of systems of theological thought, or methods of biblical interpretation, or models of expression. He is goaded and led, coaxed and compelled to traverse as far as possible fields of thought lying adjacent to biblical studies. Nor do the voices of entreaty and compulsion cease when he leaves the schools and appears upon his destined field of labor. Still comes the summons to cultivate the refinements of speech in at least three languages. He must keep abreast of the best thought of to-day and yesterday; and having learned what to say, he must continue to study how to say it. In short, culture is held before him as a most admirable aim for his constant endeavor.

It would be a senseless act to decry or to despise culture. We all assent to its necessity and importance in our work. Yet, while we do this, are we not aware that the emphasis laid upon high culture, and the earnestness used by us in the attainment of it, tempt us to an undue exaltation of it? Is there not a chance that we may place stronger reliance upon the enticing words framed by man's wisdom than upon the demonstration effected by the Spirit? Have we never caught ourselves in the act of doing this?

Or have we never discovered, in our love of culture and in our tireless efforts to possess it, a tendency to draw away from the lower orders of society? Such conduct is charged upon us. Many are ready to assert that the process by which we are brought to our work spoils us for it. They tell us that we

have acquired expensive tastes, that we have lost a liking for obscure places and a sympathy for man as man. We may and do deny the charge. Do we altogether escape the temptation? At any rate we must assent to a statement made by the late Professor Phelps, that "the great problem of life to an educated ministry is to make their culture a power instead of a luxury. Our temptations are all one way. Our mission is all the other."

Now the minister thus trained for the position thus described is set down amid surroundings with which we are altogether familiar. The field is the world. Our vocation is to and among men; and from this source will come temptations which will test the minister at every point of his being. Almost every phase and type of humanity will have its representative within the circle of his ministerial labors. He will come face to face with the generous and the mean, the amiable and the unlovely, the critical and the appreciative, the kind and the cruel, the censorious and the approving, the proud and the humble, the sensitive and the indifferent. He will encounter varied treatment from men. Levi will make him a feast. He will be refreshed by Onesiphorus and forsaken by Demas. Lydia will give heed to his words and Alexander will withstand them. An anonymous woman friend will break upon his head an alabaster box of spikenard, very precious, and another woman, a friend of course, may break the bitterness of gall upon his peace of mind. Euodias and Syntyche will take two mornings out of the heart of the week to give him the true version of their differences. Herod will sit before him on Sunday, apparently an interested, willing listener, and on Monday will send around a polite request for his head. Gaius, with his constant show of love and helpfulness, will hold him up, while Diotrephes, thirsting for pre-eminence, will see that he is not exalted beyond measure.

He will be a sign that shall be spoken