

These points were pressed with an intensity of feeling seldom experienced, and with an evident impression seldom witnessed. The unsaved present were evidently *moved*.

These *questions* were then asked:

1. What if that beggar, from any cause, had failed to call on Christ as He was passing by? He would doubtless have died without ever having his eyes opened.

2. What if any present, in this gracious time, when Jesus is consciously passing, shall fail to call on Him? Such may die in their sins and perish forever! The exhortation then was made to call on Jesus, and halt Him with the blind beggar's cry, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me"; and all who would halt Him with this cry were asked to rise in evidence of their sincerity and earnestness.

The Holy Spirit had sent the sermon home to all hearts and sealed it there. For a moment a hush as of death came over the assembly. Then nearly all the unsaved present rose to their feet and stood with streaming eyes. This act committed them, as confessors of Christ, bringing to most of them then and there a sense of pardon and peace with God.

The sermon was *effective*, because the preacher's soul was all on fire, because he *felt* that for some, if not for many before him, their supreme hour had come, and because the people were in a *condition* to be wrought upon by just such searching truth.

I have never written a word of that sermon before, nor have I ever dared to repeat it. It is, however, as fresh in my mind as when the words were uttered. Over the fifteen years between that time and this I can hear my voice; I can see the anxious faces of that congregation, and can hear

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow thee,"

as it was sung on that memorable

night; and I expect to meet in heaven many whose eyes were then opened, as Jesus of Nazareth was halted by their cry and healed the hurt of sin upon their souls. More and more am I convinced that sermons, to be effective, must be *felt by the preacher; must be born of the occasion and adapted to it.*

The preacher who does not study *conditions* will rarely be effective. He may please with rhetoric, he may convince with logic, but he will *move*, only as he preaches *timely truths* out of an *anxious and earnest heart*.

The Pastor as Depositary of the Secrets of his People.

BY WILLIAM C. WILKINSON, D.D.

THE question we raise is, To what extent may the pastor wisely consent to be a kind of confessor to souls?

In replying to this question, we say first, one must as usual practice both caution and generosity. You must be cautious not to invite or even to encourage too much the deposit, on the part of your people, of personal confidences in your keeping. But on the other hand you must generously accept such trusts as it may seem to your best wisdom on the whole useful for you to receive.

Undoubtedly it is an immense advantage to the Roman Catholic preacher for his preaching that he should sit in his confessional at the receipt of secret history from the consciences of members of his congregation. It is at once a key of admission to the adyta of human bosoms for spiritual influence and mastery over them, if you know by their own confession the full story of their inner and outer life. The confessional is an exquisitely adapted instrumentality for spiritual control of men. There is no doubt of this. But it is a human contrivance, and not an ordinance of God. And it has enormous dangers, which