

need of souls, is contemptible. No language can severely enough condemn the levity and vulgarity which sometimes degrade the pulpit. The state of the hearers is the starting-point; the divine life in Christ is the goal.

He who would begin with the condition of men in order to lead them up to Christ, must be a thorough student of the psychology of the times, as well as of the kingdom of heaven. Besides the ideal he must know the real: the selfishness of men; the deified worldliness; the ignorance which vaunts itself as wise; the conceit of depth where there is only shallow breadth; the haughtiness of false culture; the godlessness of a heartless intellectual aristocracy; and the deep curse of mammon, which first expels the poor from the house of God and then worships God fashionably. Not that we want to turn divinity into anthropology, but because we desire to bring the divine into living personal contact with the human, so that the human may be exalted to the divine.

Amid the multitude of things in the present age worthy of study, there are some of special importance for the minister. Unbelief has already been mentioned. The recent attacks of infidelity came with such suddenness and violence that the Pulpit could not at once adapt itself to them. Much of the violence seems to have spent its force, and the pulpit is already learning how better to adapt itself to the situation. In Germany, where the historical criticism was most thorough, and materialism most gross, the growth of the influence of Evangelical preachers in general—not merely of men like Christlieb, Gerok, Köegel, and Stöcker—is a striking feature of the religious life. Three or four years ago the distribution of sermons began in Berlin with 600 copies; now some 60,000 are sent weekly to all parts of the world. And the power of the pulpit will be still more increased when Schleiermacher's rule is less universally followed, that the preacher should preach "as a Christian to Christians." There may be heathen present.

When the infidelity is once mastered, it will be found that its root, so far as intellectual, is largely philosophical, though it calls itself historic criticism, or science. The conclusion, loudly proclaimed as the result of the investigation, is often found to be its premise; and it sometimes happens that what is christened "scientific method," is merely a logical process for the development of assumptions. We shall deal more radically with Positivism, Materialism, and Agnosticism, by showing that the supposed fruit of study is its root. Not that the Pulpit should abound in apologetic sermons; it often accomplishes its aim best by the direct application of spiritual truth to the needs of men. But these needs, as modified by doubt, must be understood. For much skepticism John vii: 17 is the best text. All reference to the unbelief of the day must reveal the minister's mastery