

at the same time. While we have no doubt that the very mention of some of these things in the pulpit is a degradation of its mission there is a possibility of using the events about which our hearers are thinking in the way of illustration, so as to find a readier point of contact with their thoughts and lodge a higher truth in their minds. The temperance movement, the conflict between labour and capital, socialism, gambling, dishonest methods in business and all forms of Sabbath-breaking are allowed by the most conservative, to be well within the sphere of occasional pulpit treatment. But these must not form the staple of our preaching by any means, nor is it wise to allow any outside organization to dictate to us how often we shall treat them. And when we do discuss them, it must be clear that the moral and spiritual reconstruction of men is the end sought through them.

But the best method of securing both freshness and variety is to follow closely the language and the arrangement of Scripture. There we have the freshness of nature, the exhaustless variety of the Divine mind. In the discourses of Alexander MacLaren of Manchester, we have beautiful examples of the forcible and profitable results of allowing every phrase, mood and tense to deliver its message in the speech of to-day.

As another adaptation of our message to the spirit of our time it seems to me that we need more than ever to present the bright and joyous side of the truth. I venture this suggestion that this is a somewhat sad

and pensive age. If you doubt this, consider how our children are pushed from stage to stage of study far beyond their years; how the hours once appointed for play are filled with music, painting, or calisthenics; and how early on this continent they are little old men and old women.

Even the University student has wonderfully changed since I first knew him. No longer does he tear along the street like a hind let loose leaving a row of battered doors, and a group of breathless policemen far behind him. He now walks quietly along with a comrade gravely discussing the Unknowable. The business man tries to do in twenty-five years amid special difficulties what it took our fathers fifty years in easier circumstances to accomplish. He risks much in single ventures, and he has to study far reaching complications. Consequently he is a man of many cares. He needs no lugubrious preacher to tell him that this world is a wilderness of woe and to send him from Divine service sadder than he came. We have all listened to preaching which seemed to rattle a mouldering skeleton in men's faces and to make the Divine government of earth a reign of terror. But the very purpose of the gospel is to fling the bright bow of God's consoling promises on the dark cloud of human grief and care. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem." No weak sentimentalism which emasculates the gospel will really comfort the sin sick heart. The conscience will instinctively repudiate a forgiveness which is not