

religion preached in our churches that it is cold and superficial ; that it is no religion for a dying hour — no religion for the poor — no religion for human nature ; that there is no regenerating, soul-saving power in it.

Now it may be well for us to consider — in order that we may do no injustice to this charge, however unjust the charge be — that an objection common as this, probably has some foundation either in facts or in appearances. I conceive that it has none in facts. What then are the appearances that lend it countenance ? I know of none but this. The language of our discourses differs somewhat from the ordinary language of the pulpit. We do not use the technical phraseology by which religion has been long set forth, so much as others. Instead of “ grace,” we often say, sanctify, purity, virtue ; instead of “ godliness,” goodness, devotion ; instead of “ change of heart,” becoming a good and pious man. The inference is, that our discourse wants the true and great meaning of the pulpit. This I utterly deny. I admit, at the same time, and really think, that we may err in this matter of language ; that if we used — not more of the technical language — I do not admit that we err in this — but that if we used more of the plain, homely, Saxon, Bible words, it would be better. We preach however, to people who understand the educated language of the time — the language of popular literature — and in this, we naturally frame our thoughts. But that in our thought and in our heart, we mean to preach and do preach, a vital, a life-giving, a soul-saving Christianity, I know, I feel to be true ; and nothing can shake this assurance. It is said that we do not preach Christ ; but I appeal to you with confidence, that no theme is oftener or more earnestly set