

well-known facts and truths of Christianity, not plead for purity and truth and common honesty. It must leave out the ten commandments. For our young man knows all these things, the writer says, and doesn't need to have them repeated. Whether he lives up to them appears to be quite irrelevant. But he must have bright, new, original, and interesting discourses on practical subjects. Above all, they must be new.

By this time we know the class of young men referred to pretty well. They may be found almost anywhere. They are apt to have no regular place of worship, but, as far as they go to church at all, they wander from place to place and try all the preachers. Sooner or later, they complain that preaching is very dry, and consists of nothing but a repetition of one narrow theme; and finally they keep from church altogether. Nor is it to be wondered at. "Do men gather grapes of stones, or figs of thistles?" These young men cannot find what they want in the preaching of the day, simply because the preaching of the Gospel could never minister to these wants. At Corinth, St. Paul preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Thousands gave Him no heed, probably finding in his words "nothing to carry away." Doubtless, St. Paul, with his education, culture, and eloquence, could have taken up many a theme at Corinth that would have held vast audiences of young men spellbound. But that was not his mission. "For Christ sent me to preach the Gospel, *not with wisdom of words*, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." For those who care not for the preaching of the cross, there ought to be very little in a sermon but that "to carry away."

—THE DANGERS OF ATTRACTIVE PREACHING.—Who does not like good preaching—eloquent, strong, graphic, scholarly, and practical? What young man about to enter the ministry has not longed for the power to draw vast multitudes and sway them with torrents of eloquence, and even hoped that such power in some measure might be his! Yet how few men of eloquence there are in the ministry or out of it! How very few of the clergy are there who exhibit anything remarkably attractive in their preaching! How hard it seems to rise above the general level! But still the church goes on. The Gospel is faithfully preached, souls are won for Christ, and the kingdom of God is ever widening its bounds. God seems to find it

quite unnecessary to raise up a generation of brilliant preachers. Ordinary talent consecrated to His work is all He asks. The eloquent St. Paul was probably an exception among the apostles, and even his power was due much more to other gifts than to his oratory. The churches that give the most unmistakable evidences of spiritual growth to-day are hardly ever those from whose pulpits masterly flights of oratory are heard each week. It is in the midst of plain, old-fashioned congregations with ways that are often called humdrum that the Holy Spirit is most frequently found to dwell. The preaching is modest and unpretentious, without any attempt at oratory. The minister, perhaps, could not be eloquent if he tried ever so hard. There is no straining after novelties and themes calculated to attract. Year after year, he simply tells his people the old, old story of the love of Jesus, and holds Him up as Redeemer, and Master, and Friend, and Helper. Like St. Paul, "his speech and his preaching is not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and power."

The pulpit orators have always large congregations. The multitude will always respond to the charms of attractive preaching. Eloquence is irresistible. But unless the preacher is filled with the Spirit of God, and has his eloquence entirely under control and subservient to the work of Christ, it is to little purpose. The multitudes admire and applaud, and go forth to sound the preacher's praises, but not perhaps to do the work to which He called them. The tendency is to subordinate worship to the hearing of sermons, and to go to church to be entertained, amused, and instructed, but not to draw nearer to Christ and feed upon the Word of Life. When the preacher is removed by death, or other cause, the congregation dwindles away, for it was not held together by the power of the Holy Spirit, but only by the eloquence of the preaching. And the eloquent preacher has his own temptations. It's so easy to forget the highest duty and cease to wait daily on God the Holy Ghost for all power, and to become self-reliant and pander to popular taste, and find one's pleasure not in doing Christ's work, but in having multitudes eager to hear words of merely human wisdom. The dread of the late Frederick Robertson, of Brighton, was that he should become a so-called popular preacher. To his pure soul it was something contemptible. And we are told that Thomas

Chalmers left the pulpit for the professor's chair for fear that his eloquence was entertaining rather than converting men.

HE GIVETH HIS LOVED ONES SLEEP.

He sees when their foot-steps falter, when the eyes grow weak and faint;
He marks when their strength is failing, and listens to each complaint;
He bids them rest for a season, for the pathway has grown too steep;
And, folded in fair, green pastures,
He giveth His loved ones sleep.

Like weary and worn-out children, that sigh for the daylight's close,
He knows that they oft are longing for home and sweet repose;
So He calls them in from their labors, ere the shadows around them creep,
And, silently watching o'er them,
He giveth His loved ones sleep.

He giveth it, oh, so gently! as a mother will hush to rest
The babe that she softly pillows so tenderly on her breast.
Forgotten are now the trials and sorrows that made them weep,
For with many a soothing promise
He giveth His loved ones sleep.

He giveth it! Friends the dearest can never this boon bestow!
But He touches the drooping eyelids, and placid the features grow!
Their foes may gather about them, and storms may round them sweep,
But, guarding them safe from danger,
He giveth His loved ones sleep.

All tread of the distant future, all fears that oppress to-day,
Like mists that oppose the sunlight, have noiselessly passed away.
No call nor clamor can rouse them from slumbers so pure and deep,
For only His voice can reach them,
Who giveth His loved ones sleep.

Weep not that their toils are over; weep not that their race is run:
God grant we may rest as calmly when our work, like theirs, is done!
Till then we resign with gladness our treasure to Him to keep,
And rejoice in the sweet assurance—

He giveth His loved ones sleep.

—Selected.

MIDDLE AGE.

Beyond the surging waves that lash the shore,
Out in the calm that lulls the middle sea,
Unheard the tempests that have gone before,
Unseen the breakers that are yet to be,
Here, for a space, 'tis given me to rest,
Youth overpast, with age not yet begun,
Here in the calm serene and strifeless, blest
With great content, I wait the set of sun.
Lord, through the breakers that are yet to come,
As through the tempests that have gone before,
Guard my frail craft and guide it safely home
Into the haven on the farther shore.

—I. E. C.