

men to the others. In this interpretative function of the pulpit are given at once its peculiar privilege and its necessary limitations. Because of its high obligation to all men it can appear as the special pleader for no class ; it is never to seem to be the paid attorney of any special class interest. The moment it should so appear it would lose its power as a sacred interpreter of human life and forfeit its Christian privilege of mediation among men.

The supreme message, also, of the pulpit both exalts and limits the preacher's discussion of labor problems. He is, indeed, to know men as citizens of this world, and to make all present human interests his Christian business ; but he is to meet all men likewise as citizens of a higher kingdom, and to hold all temporal interests in their true relations to the higher worths and far-reaching issues of this life. Hence discussions of temporal things are to be more than economics in the pulpit ; our times belong to eternity.

From these general statements there may be derived some more specific responsibilities and restrictions pertaining to the pulpit discussion of labor problems.

1. In the discussion of any question relating to the life or welfare of any one class of men the pulpit is, at the same time, to keep itself in touch with other classes and conditions of life. In pleading for one it is to be carefully just to all. In discovering abuses, the clergy need to be particularly careful to recognize the uses of any economic factor, else they will alienate where they should mediate among men. The pulpit is to be known as the friend of labor, the representative, in the name of the Son of Man, of the poor, the oppressed, and the lost. It has its own missionary task in rescuing the submerged classes. And there come times when it must speak fearlessly for those who cannot speak for themselves. But in all the responsiveness of its sympathies and quickness of its sense of social justice it is also to understand the forces which make the world what it is ; and it is called to represent with just judgment the rich as well as the poor, and to hold fast its influence with the educated. It is not so to espouse any one class interest as to do injustice to any other. There may be little danger of erring in the insistence of the pulpit upon the social obligations of the rich—the public Christian conscience is becoming in this respect a clear and searching light,—but the clergy are more exposed to the peril of making their preaching an unnecessary foolishness by ill-considered utterances which will not command respect from close students of economic subjects. For although economics can hardly be numbered among the exact sciences, social students are pursuing scientific methods, and their investigations on many social lines are assuming the proportions of a science. Inconsiderate declamation in the pulpit on such subjects, for instance, as trusts, or monopolies, or the rights of property does not minister to public edification. Constructive work must always be sober work.

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