

It was the power of manhood touching manhood ; a man at peace with God influencing a man who needed peace.

In the regular calls our pastor was as wise as he was agreeable. He didn't seem the professional pastor at all. His tone was natural. It rung with genuineness. He fringed every topic he touched with a charming religiousness. And to make a religious impression he was not compelled to lug in the set themes of church and pulpit. Indeed, with consummate art he appeared to avoid, and now and then intentionally to evade them. But after his "little prayer," as the children called it, and his cheery good-bye, every body felt as if an alabaster-box of precious ointment had been broken in the house, and its fragrance reached the very attic. And lumbering Ned, the twelve-year-old who never took to preachers, wondered when that "jolly one was a comin' agin'." Mother wondered how she came to tell him so freely about her experiences and her doubts, and she was almost sorry for it until one Sunday, soon after, while he was preaching, she found her problems solved, and her eyes wet and her heart glad. She said to her husband, "He must have made up that sermon in our parlour." For this "uneducated" minister had a way of reading people as he read books. And when a man puts the contents of folks in his sermon, folks take his preaching to heart, because it certainly reaches their heads, and with every-day people head and heart are not very widely separated.

As for places of sorrow, the pastor sought them out and went often. And there he was at his best, if one can say that of a man who seemed always and everywhere at his best. What good cheer he brought ! He filled the place with spiritual ozone. He was himself a tonic. Once or twice the old infidel doctor, who had a difficult case on hand, sent for that parson to call. "He is a sort of a mind-cure," said the old doctor ; "but he has no nonsense, and makes a trace of religious talk go further and do more than all my medicines." The doctor didn't know the secret. The Lord Jesus and His faithful minister did. It was interesting to notice how much the minister found out, in his calls on sick people, about their past lives, their views of religion, their ground of hope for the future (often so pitifully weak and worthless), their regrets at unfaithfulness, and the humiliating reasons for their regrets. It was plain to see when he preached on the Sabbath that whatever he may have done with the last volume of sermons by Canon This, or Archbishop That, or the latest series of Bampton Lectures, he had read closely and with throbbing heart the red pages of living experience in the chambers of sorrow.

Our student-pastor did not refuse a feast when the chance offered. He was thankful for his invitation. The "R. S. V. P." elicited a genial acceptance. And he was on hand. But he was on hand as a man, a gentleman who never forgot and never obtrusively reminded anybody that he was a minister. His self-mastery gave him mastership of men. His transparent purity made him a king among maidens. His manliness and wisdom put him into easy relations with motherhood. And the children "made for him" to hear a story or learn of a good thing to play. He was a gentleman among society ladies, a man of practical sense among men and women of affairs, a friend among children and youth, but everywhere and always he was the dignified, refined, spiritually-minded pastor whose presence was a benediction.