

more. People do not now respect the cloth unless they find a man inside of it."

The common conception of the ministry, especially among irreligious young men is, that it is not a manly vocation. They seem to have the impression that there is an element of mean, sneaking, effeminate insincerity about it; that it is a calling whose members form a third sex, so that the human race is composed of men, women, and clergymen, (enumerated in the descending scale.) They have imbibed the notion that the preacher must be coddled by a different method of treatment from that which they accord to other men. They imagine that he is a soft, putty kind of a man on whom every passer by can leave the mark of his knuckles if he be so minded, but whose unspeakable weakness it is generous to treat with the very greatest consideration. They fancy him one who lives on public charity and who rarely gives a quid pro quo, who requires a special rate when he travels, and when he buys goods, and over whose property the State must suspend its right of taxation because it is a decent and religious thing to do so. It is only a short step from all this to regard the preacher as subscribing a creed which he no longer believes, and preaching doctrines repugnant to his own reason for a morsel of bread. If there have been individuals whose character evidently belied this conception their critics said, "What a pity such a fine fellow should be a preacher."

Now although there may have been

here and there, some grounds for such an opinion, it never was a true picture: and it ought to be, and really is, an anachronism to-day. No man is readier to endure hardness than the good soldier of Jesus Christ. But he must, more than ever, be prepared to stand before all men on the ground of his true manhood and receive the same treatment as all others. He must have in him such a keen sense of honour, such a sensitive chivalrous spirit that he will decline any special advantage accorded to him on the ground of some mediæval conception of his office.

The Preacher's loyalty to truth must not only be a manly fairness, the soul of honour; but also a fearless, heroic bravery which dares everything for God and the highest interests of mankind. We need now a higher order of courage which is not only the instinct of battle which nerves itself to do and endure when some conflict draws near; but also with calm enduring patience stands by an unpopular cause in its weakest hour; which resists the domination of narrow prejudices and traditionalism within the Church as well as her common foes without; and which perseveringly saps and mines at public opinion until the unwelcome truth is universally acknowledged and appropriate action follows. The Presbyterian Church will always expect a high order of courage in her ministers. The traditions of her martyrs, confessors, and covenanters, ought to inspire all her children to stand by their convictions though the heavens fall. Her pulpit is no place for poltrons.