

at a loss to overcome. That difficulty relates to what I may call Free Trade in Labor. Among the working classes of England we have countless numbers who would shout until they were hoarse in favor of free trade in corn, and indeed in favor of free trade in all articles of merchandise; if the farmers and merchants were to go down into the ports of the country and protest against the landing of foreign wheat and foreign manufactures, such farmers and merchantmen would be hooted with ineffable scorn as men who were opposed to liberty, to progress and to everything worthy of civilization. But the very men who have done so much in the way of hooting others would not allow their own fellow workmen to go to work in the case of a strike; and if foreign workmen were brought over for the purpose of taking the place of those who were not working in the usual way, such foreign importations would be resented, not with words only but with the most active and positive hostility. My difficulty is to explain the difference between free trade in labor and free trade in corn. Where is the fairness which says, We insist upon the foreigner sending us corn when we want it, but if he attempts to send us labor when capital calls for it we will be ready to repel the approach as a criminal invasion of English territory and industrial rights? Because some of us have spoken rather plainly upon this matter we have had to encounter no little hostility. The hostility, however, has neither disturbed our digestion nor our sleep, because we have felt confident in the justice of the position which we have been led to assume.

But it is just here that the difficulty of the pulpit treatment of such topics appears. The preacher has before him both classes, namely, the employers and the employed, and when he undertakes to discuss

questions of labor and capital he ought to be just to all the parties, persons, and interests concerned. But would it not be better in the overwhelming majority of cases for the preacher not to go into any details in the consideration of controversial subjects in the pulpit? There is no time to do justice to the details, yet if they be partially treated the preacher will be blamed either for ignorance or selfishness; he will be distrusted because he has not stated the whole case, or he will be credited with self-consideration because he has not been sufficiently hard in dealing with the claims of employers. My distinct advice to all preachers is to abstain from detailed controversy in the pulpit. I would venture to say to them, Deal with great principles, and leave their application to individual conscience and judgment. Preach the Golden Rule, and that will settle all social conflicts and animosities. Preach the profound, complete, eternal Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that will work miracles in the way of social adjustment and progress. There are generalities which are infinitely more influential for good than any mere details can ever be. Of course the preachers will be blamed for the vagueness of their statements, but they must accept this reproach, believing that only in the application of great vital principles can be found a solution of the problems which gather around the action and interaction of vexatious details.

I cannot but hold that the church ought not to be regarded as a hall of social science, or as a club for the discussion of any particular but ever-changing subject. The church is emphatically "the house of prayer." By "prayer" I do not mean the one act of supplication, I mean the whole act of communion with God, and the exposition of the Divine Will in reference to the affairs