

abundance of matter. Long trains of thought are to be relieved by apt figures and, if possible, should culminate in them, so as the better to impress and fix the thought. The models are to be sought chiefly in the Bible, above all in the Gospel. These illustrations are more essential for edification than for dialectic purposes. The states of the soul must be described with all possible vividness. "The sermon must learn from poetry how to depict the emotions." Whilst all the power of language should be used to affect the emotions, the delivery must be in harmony with the feeling, and the tone and manner must receive from the heart an inspiration which no theory can describe. The practical application of the truth aims to touch the heart and move the will. Here, in particular, length and tediousness are to be avoided. All must culminate in the peroration, in which the turns of thought should be quick and illustrations abound. Two rules close the article: 1. The preacher ought to be a more careful student of life in order to get material for rhetorical purposes. 2. He should adapt his language more to that of ordinary life. "Like Luther, the preacher should learn from people at market how to address them."

Important as the demanded change in preaching is, it will be evident from the following that still deeper and broader changes are required.

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL REFORM.

Look where we will, the social condition of the various European nations is anything but hopeful. They may not all be in so agitated a state as Ireland and Russia, yet there is not one of them in which the masses are not discontented and anxious for some change to better their condition. While communism claims to seek the welfare of the laboring classes, it directs attention too exclusively to their material condition. The efforts of these classes to rise would excite more sympathy if other interests were also emphasized, particularly the moral and spiritual ones. The rapid growth of the godless, communistic spirit, which has no hope beyond this life and adopts the motto, "A man is what he eats," has led to a careful study of social questions and to various efforts to avert the threatened danger. Bismarck holds that the government should not merely study the needs of the masses, but must also legislate for their relief. While in the halls of legislation the representatives of socialism are not modest in presenting their grievances and demanding redress from the political powers, leaders in Christian thought are earnestly considering the question of the moral development and the evangelization of the people. That the spiritual work required cannot be accomplished by the Church as now constituted is evident. A state church, of which all become members by baptism and confirmation; in which lay activity is not developed; in which the members are mere aggregates, not an organism, so that union in congregational effort is scarcely known; which

lacks the inspiration and energy that spring from a free Christian organization—such a church, with its enormous parishes and few preachers, with its distractions, its indifference and even skepticism, cannot hope to win the masses back to the Gospel. Voluntary associations not directly the outgrowth of the state church are, however, very efficient; but they enlist only very few of the many who claim to be Christians. It is a hopeful sign that believers are beginning to realize that radical changes are necessary if the church is to accomplish its mission of leavening the masses with Christian truth.

Of the numerous works written in this spirit, I have selected for special notice a book by Dr. E. Barth (*Die Reform der Gesellschaft*, 1886). He claims that one need but look at society to learn that Christianity is not the social power it was designed to be. With all our progress in other respects, in social influence the Church now seems hardly equal to the first ages of Christianity. Indeed, there is manifestly a lack of confidence in the power of religion to reform society; and this is partly due to the fact that all hope of accomplishing this is concentrated on the millennium. The author considers the condition of the family, the school, the church, and the various parties and societies, and shows why there is no hope of finding in their present condition the means of reform. He denounces the union of Church and State as "verily a curse which has rested on the Christian Church since Constantine the Great." "The Lutheran Church lets the State think and act for it. Instead of standing free and independent, a rock of truth in the midst of falsehood and ignorance, it slavishly subjects itself to the whims of the temporal sovereign and to the changes of political parties." He quotes Laboulaye as saying truthfully, that "a state church is a heathen institution." As now constituted, the Church has no influence with social democrats, who not only reject all proffered help from it, but treat this church with contempt.

But, instead of dwelling on the evils, let us look at the remedy proposed by the author. This he finds in a thorough reorganization of the Church. We must return to the apostolic congregations, of course taking into account the modern industrial and political status. No congregation should number over 5,000 souls. It must be like one family, permeated with the spirit of Christian love. Not merely in spiritual, but also in temporal matters, the members ought to manifest an interest in one another. That in such an organization, in which the Spirit of Christ prevails, some cannot be lords, while others are slaves, is self-evident. The vast difference between the educated and illiterate will also be diminished. The poor, being better situated, will have more time for culture; and the educated, recognizing themselves as living members of the body of Christ, will be ready to aid their less favored brother. The congre-