

We might notice also other departures from the church usages of the past, which, though some may reckon them unimportant, are of very questionable utility. We are changing in our postures during praise and prayer. Our singers claim that they can sing better standing than sitting; a claim, however, that most of them forego when they come together during the week to practise. Our church sessions yielding to this claim, the result is that we are now invited to stand always in praise. As might be expected from this indiscriminating practice, many of our people, infirm or tired from long travel, being unable to stand during both praise and prayer, resort to the unscriptural habit of sitting during the latter. Here we have change but not scriptural progress. If our choirs are bound to have an erect position as the most favourable to singing, let there at least be some wise discrimination made in regard to the infirm or tired of the flock that would prefer much rather to sit. We do not forget, however, that as a result of this change, while most of our people stand during praise, not a few of both old and young sit during prayer; and, for our part, we would much rather see the scriptural attitude of prayer maintained, and the people sit during singing in the old-fashioned way. If our singers aim purely at melodious effect, it may or may not be advantageous for them to stand; but if they wish to present the true offering of the heart, of which song is the mere outward expression, they may, perhaps, find the sitting posture quite adequate.

We would now close these remarks with some observations on the characteristics of modern preaching. Much excellent preaching there is in the present day, we cordially admit. A great deal of thorough scriptural exposition, and a large amount of sound evangelical doctrine, well illustrated, is poured from our pulpits from week to week.

In not a few cases, however, the supply of either is extremely limited, and what there is, is largely diluted. Racy and pathetic anecdotes (*à la* Moody), culminating in a good deal of sensuous feeling, which the inexperienced are apt to mistake as religious, has become too much the order of the day; and preaching of this kind is doubtlessly not a little sought after and enjoyed. "I like a sermon that brings tears to my eyes," is a remark that we hear from time to time. Most pastors, we dare say, would like to deliver sermons leading to this effect, provided the tears were tears of penitence or of some other truly religious affection; but if the tears sought after are those of only mere sentimental feeling, alas, we say, for the piety that can live on such swill.

We think a proper aim of the pulpit would be to lead to a better spiritual discernment in the pews, so that mere natural feeling may never be mistaken for pure religious affection. Doctrinal preaching we must have, and sound doctrine and plenty of it, at that, if we would avoid that snail type of Christianity which is all flesh and no bones. That kind of religion may do in darkness or among the clouds, but it soon melts in the sunlight, and leaves behind it only a trail of slime.

Sound exposition and sound doctrine, well illustrated, and brought home to the heart by the might of the Spirit, is that type of preaching which alone is calculated to awaken the spiritually dead, feed the babes, and build up and nourish full-grown Christian manhood.