

of the spirit of prayer ; but I am going to assume a solemn tone, so as to convince myself and you that I am quite in earnest." All this worldliness and indifference and languor passes into the congregation. As they repose in the corners of the pews, as they sit and stand and stare in all directions, with empty or supercilious gaze, they declare plainly that they have come to church with no religious interest or aim, and that they will probably leave it with no religious impression. The sermon is, in such cases, the only hope for the service. In *that* the minister is likely to be really interested, since he has written it with thought and care, and therefore he will more or less interest the congregation, and so some good will be done.

When worship is felt to have thus degenerated into a form, empty of meaning and life, serious persons will be revolted by it, and will be tempted to desert public worship altogether. Yet in so doing they will miss the advantages above mentioned, and will feel that they are becoming lonely and morbid in their interior life. Therefore the question is, How shall new life and earnestness be breathed into public worship, so as to make it really interesting and useful ?

There are two ways in which this end may be reached. First, the minister and the congregation may make direct efforts to obtain a new and earnest interest in their worship, and secondly, they may indirectly seek it through the medium of new forms and improved methods. There are these two wants, — the want of New Wine, and the want of New Bottles, — of a new spirit, and of new forms. A new spirit will give novelty and interest to old forms, and new forms will often awaken a new spirit.

Let the minister feel an earnest desire to give new life