

open stand on the Lord's side, because there is such a diversity of religious opinions among men. They scarcely know what to believe, and so they excuse themselves from believing anything.

5. Those who stand aloof from Christ and His people because they see so many faults and failings in professing Christians.

"But what is that to THEE? Follow THOU ME." Christ's claim is obligatory on every man; not one is excused. It is not my neighbor's vineyard that I am to keep, but my own. If all the world refuse to follow Christ, it will not lessen my obligation one iota. In the last great day I must "answer for myself, and not for another."

### SERMONIC CRITICISM.

*"And how did Garrick speak the soliloquy last night?"*

*"Oh, against all rule, my lord, most ungrammatically; betwixt the substantive and the adjective, which should agree together in number, case and gender, he made a breach thus—stopping as if the point wanted setting; and betwixt the nominative case, which your lordship knows should govern the verb, he suspended his voice in the epilogue a dozen times, three seconds and three-fifths, by a stop-watch, my lord, each time."*

*"Admirable grammarian! But in suspending his voice was the sense suspended likewise? did no expression of attitude or countenance fill up the chasm? Was the eye silent? Did you narrowly look?"*

*"I looked only at the stop-watch, my lord."—STERNE.*

PREACHING TO THE INDIVIDUALS.—Daniel Webster once said: "If ministers in our day would preach more to the individuals and less to the crowd, there would not be so much listlessness among their hearers." By this we suppose he meant to say that a sermon was not an oration to a great audience so much as a personal address of one speaker to one hearer—as the address of Nathan to David—"Thou art the man." And it can scarcely admit of a doubt that the efficacy of pulpit addresses would be greatly increased if ministers would borrow more of the spirit and manner of Christ's addresses to Nicodemus, to the woman at the well, rather than the lofty style of the orations of Edward Everett or Mr. Webster himself. But there is a danger, in the other extreme, in our cultivation of this conversationalism in the pulpit. We must not allow ourselves to fall into a habit of urgency and iteration of appeal. We have no illustration of this in any address of Christ. In His most urgent and impassioned invitations or warnings, He never lost His dignity. He gave the invitation, or the warning, or the rebuke, and then left it with His hearers. After He had put the whole truth before the young ruler, he only added: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."

THE REASON NOT THE ONLY TEST.—"B. T.," in a sermon before us, deduces from the text, "Come, let us reason together," the theme, "The reason the only test for truth." The text does not teach this theme, nor is the theme *true*. There are other tests for moral and spiritual truths besides those supplied by reason; tests equally, perhaps more, infallible. The instincts of a well-developed soul reach upward and inward into the spiritual world. Says Christ: "If any man *willeth* to do His will he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God or whether I speak from myself." (John vii: 17.) He will know as a Mozart knows that a combination of sounds is a harmony or a discord; know as an Angelo knows that a painting is beautiful. The truths up to the level of which a soul has risen need bring no credentials. They are a matter of course—self-evident. As we said in a previous article, the *developed soul is its own touch-stone for spiritual truths*. The affections, the moral sentiments, have an illuminating power.

"For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway, Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness."

They have more than an illuminating power; they have eyes with which to see, they have the sense of spiritual touch.