

in them that hear. The power of the pulpit then, from a scriptural point of view, is to be estimated by its power to save men from sin, its ruinous consequences, and to build up in holiness, righteousness and peace. The power of the pulpit therefore is not to be judged of by its ability to *draw*, though that power, sanctified, is a gift by no means to be despised; nor by its ability to gather money for the paying off of debts which should never have been contracted; though here again is a talent one may well desire; but the true gauge of successful preaching is to be found in the turning of men from darkness unto light, in building up on "your most holy faith," in altered lives, in tears sanctified with joyous submission, in burdens lifted from weary hearts, and strength imparted to those who often are bewildered, dazed with the worries and the toil of life.

I had thought of enquiring whether the pulpit of to-day is equal to the pulpit of generations gone, but as the question was thought upon, the feeling grew, that no reliable means of answering are at hand; at any rate the question must first be answered whether the Christian world is more righteous to-day than at former periods in the church's history. Personally I believe that the power of Christianity is steadily advancing, though as the ocean tide, in waves. The tide does not rise as water in our reservoir, steadily, almost imperceptibly, as the engines constantly and evenly pump, but by waves, which follow each other dashing each a little higher than the former and then rushing back into the great ocean again. Caught in the back swell we despondingly cry all is sinking, but faith beholds righteousness rising "as the waves of the sea"; (Is. xlviii, 18,) and to this end the foolishness of preaching is ever working. "It were to be wished the flaws were fewer in the earthen vessel holding treasure," but in those earthen vessels the treasure has been placed, "that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves."

One truth of practical importance in the relation of pulpit and pew I would here press. The church of history since the fourth century has been supported chiefly by the state. Taking the place in political economy of the old Pagan faiths, governments were nominally Christian and supported the church. This in a money point of view gave independence to the preacher, who did not depend upon the

whims of the people for his daily bread, however much he depended upon his political masters. A sturdy nonconformist, who has long advocated disestablishment in England, but who has resided for some time on this continent, said to the writer conversing on this subject, that he should return with different feelings to the old land, on this question; he had seen so much of the tyranny of the pew as to lead him to the conclusion that there were worse evils than an established church. The facts which our friend noticed are painfully real; the people pay their money and claim from the preacher as from their tailor the fashion their fancy dictates. Men prefer largely to hear their own prejudices echoed, their fancies pleased, rather than to receive instruction, they desire to be at ease in Zion, to be rested by being amused or put spiritually to sleep. "Prophecy smoothe things," but do not touch us, our pockets, our pleasures or our practices. In meeting these real difficulties I am not disposed to advocate "establishment," rather the independence of Paul, willing to suffer the loss of all things that he might possess the righteousness of Christ; knowing how to be abased and how to abound, having the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, able to do all things in him that strengtheneth." *Only a christian people have no right to place that burden upon a solitary shoulder, they themselves scarce aiding with their little finger. It is criminal cowardice thus to do.*

The interdependence of pulpit and pew is not to be regretted, rather deepened, only the pew should learn it has other responsibilities than fault finding, than a mere attendance and support; and the power of the pulpit will be largely proportioned by the material sympathy and aid received from the pew. Gentle reader, how is your part being performed? I know it is easy to lay down rules, to say what ought to be, to detect flaws in what is. The sun has many spots. What are we doing to render the preaching of the cross effective? In no country has the pulpit as a whole been more effective in past days than in Scotland. Wordsworth speaks of "the virtuous household though exceeding poor, pure livers, fearing God: the very children taught stern self respect, a reverence for God's word, and an habitual piety, maintained with strictness scarcely known on English ground;" and in no country has an educated ministry been insisted on