

solitary truths, important in themselves, so far and so exclusively, as to produce a sickly self-conscious kind of Christianity. Then there comes also an undue eagerness for immediate results, in the declaration of a decision. Little good is being done, unless large numbers profess conversion. And to secure this primary end, recourse is had to many doubtful methods of pressure. The dangers arising out of this, not only to many of those immediately affected, but to the general life of the Church, are not very far to seek. There is likely to be a weakness, that becomes indifferent to anything but fragmentary truths, a want of tolerance for principles that are profound or far-reaching, and a want of patience with the ordinary methods of Church worship and Christian work.

Now, if the church is to do thorough and really satisfactory work she cannot be indifferent to the claims of intelligence, for nothing but truth can meet the deep and permanent wants of the soul. A vigorous spiritual life must draw its supplies largely from imbued truth. One fears, too, that there is a growing desire for a superficial, sentimental, anecdotal kind of preaching. And perhaps one of the worst features of the case is, that this is not unfrequently heralded forth as "preaching the simple Gospel." Simple enough it may be; but it is surely a grave error to suppose that the genuine revival of true religion, or the consolidation and edification of the church, can be effected by preaching of this description. Success along some so-called popular lines of preaching spells failure to the church. And in view of tendencies such as these, associated, as they not unfrequently are, with the most reckless scripture exegesis, is it not more than ever necessary, that the ministers who go forth from our halls should be "wise scribes" capable of grasping the deeper elements of revealed truth, and of enforcing them upon intelligent minds by sound principles of Biblical interpretation.

(2.) There is another feature of our times that argues in favour of the exegetical chair, rather than the practical. Biblical criticism, in its bearing upon the history of the past, and the practical problems of present-day life is one of the burning questions of the day. Criticism is in the air. And probably its most living phase just now is that of interpretation. Textual difficulties and cognate subjects are those that are agitating his-