

refinement, doctrinal soundness, and fitness for the work of an evangelist. We are speaking only in general terms, and of modern evangelists as a class.

Secondly, the sphere of their labor is generally found in connection with our organized churches, and even among the most intelligent, active, and highly developed church organizations. It is not infrequent that an evangelist will not consent to undertake work in connection with any single church, but that he demands, as a requisite and condition of his coming, that a larger or smaller number of churches should be united in the effort. We have known a prominent modern evangelist to stipulate that twenty churches should be associated in the meetings which he conducted. As a consequence, the evangelists frequently bestow their labors for the most part upon habitual hearers of the Gospel. Their audiences are often almost exclusively composed of persons who are accustomed to attend places of worship. They reach but few of the non-church-goers, the neglected and lapsed masses of our great communities. In other words, they oftentimes go over the same ground that the pastor has trodden for many years.

Thirdly, the methods of evangelists are oftentimes peculiar and even questionable. The work they do is sometimes amazingly superficial. The great temptation is before them and before the churches with which they are associated to magnify results on a numerical scale; and the numbering of the people, as in the days of David, brings the combined evils of war, pestilence, and famine. There is a tendency to superficial methods of getting and numbering converts, who are sometimes received into the Church on the impulse of the moment without proper investigation as to credible evidence of a regenerate character. They are swept in on the wave of a popular excitement, and become mere driftwood to lie along the shore, an obstacle to progress, having no vital relation to the Church of God. We need not refer to the innovations which are oftentimes introduced into our church life, and to the unpleasant memorials of evangelistic visits which sometimes confront the pastor for months or even years after the evangelist withdraws. That much good is done, and that, in the hands of a wise and holy man, great results for good are often reaped we would not for a moment question; yet we have candidly touched upon some of the objectionable features of modern evangelistic work to which none of us is blind, and the full force of which some of us have felt when such movements have been conducted within our own churches.

A second part of our theme demands at least a rapid glance at the organic life of the Church. We raise simply two or three questions which seem to us to demand a thorough investigation. First, what is the effect of such evangelistic movements upon the ordinary pulpit ministrations? Is it not their tendency to create dissatisfaction, or at least discouragement, as to the ordinary work of the minister and pastor, so that but little fruit will be expected from the regular ministrations of the man of God?