

IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCE many vexed questions emerge, most closely connected with public morals, and no pastor can rightly divide the word of God to-day without occasionally touching on them. The young artisans of his congregation will come to him for advice about the attitude they should take towards certain labour organizations which are now found in almost every community; and he will need to be able rightly to estimate their code of morals, and their ultimate tendency. Perhaps it will sometimes be necessary for him to advise his people about the use of those extremely dangerous weapons which we call strikes. A grave responsibility rests on him amid the issues of to-day lest, on the one hand, he become a narrow demagogue, or on the other, the mere watch dog of the monopolist against the inalienable rights of man. Nor can the preacher ignore the literature of unbelief. It is not wise to be frequently assuming an apologetic tone in the pulpit but it is almost a necessity to know what our young men are reading, and to know what they, who have no sympathy with Christianity, think of it, and of the problems of duty, and futurity. Especially is this necessary if, as many believe, we are on the eve of the greatest conflict with scepticism that the church has ever seen.

As an antidote to the depressing effect which the widespread and able unbelief of to-day may have upon him, I would recommend the history of Christian Missions and Evangelistic effort. He will find it a most profitable and in-

spiring part of his equipment to follow the great movements of Christian activity all over the earth, and to observe how fully Jehovah hath implemented his promises to the faithful church, in the power of the truth and the plenitude of the Spirit among the heathen abroad, and the lapsed and careless at home. And if the history of these present movements be instructive the narrative of the past is not less profitable. He who knows the mind of the Church Catholic from the beginning of her history will not be guilty of propounding some rejected heresy with all the gravity of a new discovery of truth. Nor will he suffer himself to be seriously alarmed by the New Theology or the Higher Criticism. Many similar movements have been met and incorporated into the Church's life. In this age also she will easily absorb all the truth which these investigators have to offer and blow the chaff into oblivion.

The preacher of to-day must be a student of the signs of the times. I do not mean by this term that method of interpreting the Scriptures which finds a third rate French politician on a white horse in the Apocalypse, or which gleams from the language of Daniel a knowledge the last things not attained by the Son of God. But I mean cultivating the power to grasp the tendencies of modern thought, the ability to see whither the main current is flowing that we may be able to influence it, and to use it in the service of the Lord.

It has been well said, "The world moves and we must move with it if we are to be of any use in it as preachers.