

measure up to our loving sympathetic helpfulness for their confidence in them. The Psalmist's grateful exclamation, "Thy gentleness hath made me great" has been echoed again and again by lives redeemed by the love and faith of some great heart. Who shall tell the power over Peter's life of that word, "Thou art Simon, thou shalt be called Cephas?"

Prof. Drummond says "Such tales of woe I've heard in the enquiry room that I've felt I must go home and change my very clothes after the contact." What magic power called forth such confidence? His manly, trustful, robust faith in men. Arnold, of Rugby, formed half or two-thirds of many of the men of England. The music of hope must be kept ringing in the pulpit if we would lead up to the attainment of large life and excellence. Such hope, my brethren, is the fruitage of love alone. It is born of the "God of Hope." It cannot be made or acquired. It is begotten of companionship with Him who, even in the agony of death, said: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

There is a youth, degraded with vice. Of his restoration all men despair. There is one who never despairs. His mother. Mother love never faileth. "Charity hopeth all things." Such must be the relation of pastor and people.

Thirdly, Hope for the Age in which He Lives.—The preacher must not only hope for himself and his people, but for the age in which he lives. He who would make his age better must live in sympathetic, loving, hopeful touch with it. He must catch its spirit and yet be above it. "Every man is first the creation of his own age, and then in turn helps to change his age into another that is to follow."

The preacher's mission is to elevate his age. If so, he must breathe its spirit, love it, keep in sympathetic touch with it, and yet be independent of it.

There are certain prevailing trends of this age, healthful in their aim, yet liable to dangers. Growth and development is always liable to danger through misdirection. The preacher's attitude toward these should be neither to ignore, antagonize or unnaturally repress, on the one hand, or weakly or carelessly drift with the tide, on the other.

In the church the prevailing signs are devotion to the young; seen in Sunday

school work, conventions, leagues, etc. These must be kept well in hand.

Missionary movement. Blessed and hopeful signs to be encouraged, but let the preacher hold with a loving, sympathetic and firm hand, lest the church become disintegrated, and that which was a healthful growth on the grand old Tree becomes a wild or struggling encumbering and fruitless vine.

With each and all of these movements the minister must keep in sympathetic, loving touch, recognizing them as hopeful signs of the times, yet be so far above and independent as to be able to guide the vessel of church and society safely between the rocks on either hand, neither vainly resisting the healthful currents of his time, nor weakly yielding to their sometimes fitful flow.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH.

The preacher must be pre-eminently a man of truth. The words of his Divine Example before Pilate must be his watchword ever: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I might bear witness to the truth."

That is his one great mission "To bear witness unto the truth."

The spirit of love and devotion for truth must be to him the master passion. Not in the narrower sense of merely speaking truly or in harmony with our thoughts. The Saviour uses the word, as F. W. Robertson has beautifully shown, to represent the word reality. "To bear witness to the reality." The minister is to be a witness to fact, truth, reality. And this in three particulars. In his conversation, his preaching, his life.

First, In Conversation.—Here is an important principle to guide him in his conversation—truth or silence, facts or nothing. To say that the minister should speak the truth in the sense of being veracious would be but an insult to your integrity. That is granted always and everywhere. But truth is more than veracity. If one repeats a scandal believing it to be true, he may be veracious, but he is not truthful. To be truthful, he must speak in harmony with facts. The ministry has no use for the gossipy or garrulous tongue. By such circuits have been torn to pieces. There are enough of these outside the parsonage. A silent tongue is a jewel to any man or woman. To the preacher it is a pearl of great price.