

They are sufficiently educated to have imbibed the modern spirit, the spirit of patient enquiry and scientific modesty, and they are repelled by every exhibition of the opposite spirit. As they think and feel now, all classes in our congregations will gradually come to think and feel.

But what, it may be asked, would you have the Minister do? Must he not be faithful to his convictions? If he is to do any good, must he not preach a definite theology? Did not Jesus of Nazareth speak with authority to learned and unlearned? To all which questions, I answer emphatically, Yes. Faithful the witness for God must be or he is not a Minister of the true Witness. Definite truth he must preach or else he should never enter the pulpit. He is not called on to take sides on disputed questions, and he should do so least of all when he does not understand both sides. As a public teacher, he is bound to master a subject before he attempts to teach it to grown men. When he believes that the spiritual convictions of his people are bound up with prejudices, preconceptions and traditions, he must be patient and beware lest in pulling up tares, he pull up the wheat also. Reflecting on how slowly new truth dawned on his own mind, how at first it seemed to threaten the very foundations of the old edifice in which he and his pious father and mother lived long in peace, enjoying the light of God's own countenance, he will be careful not to pull down until he has built up and on no account to shock the sensibilities or blunt the reverential feelings without which religion cannot exist. Knowing how closely the forms are intertwined with the essence of religious belief, he will take no iconoclastic delight in ridiculing or demolishing any religious forms with which he is brought in contact and he will rigidly keep to this rule, when dealing with other denominations as well as his own. But, while cherishing the babes, he must not repel the strong young men. The more faithful he is in fighting against Sin, in preaching the Christ of the Gospels, in authoritatively expounding his thoughts of God and his wondrous ethical ideals, the more will they rally round him and be his glory and his crown. But he must know what sin is and what it is not, what are true types of piety and what are exaggerated, or false and unhealthy types. There are sins far more subtle and far more common than the drink sin of which so much is said. While denouncing the one, let him not make room for seven others each more dangerous than the other. Let him declare the laws of the Kingdom and point out lovingly and as definitely as human language permits the Rock of Ages. The more he himself clings