

ARTICLE VII.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY A PRAGMATIC LIFE.

BY THE REVEREND A. A. BERLE, D.D.

THREE distinguished gentlemen have recently undertaken to set forth their ideas of "the ministry as a profession," in addresses before the Divinity Club of Harvard University,—the Reverend George A. Gordon, D.D., pastor of the Old South Church in Boston, *facile princeps* among preachers and spiritual interpreters, speaking on "The Claims of the Ministry upon Strong Men"; the Right Reverend William Lawrence, Bishop of Massachusetts, speaking on "The Ministry from a Practical Point of View"; and President Eliot himself discussing "More Harvard Graduates for the Ministry," though incidentally indicating with great candor and clearness his idea of the ministry. The addresses, issued by the University, have been bound for general circulation.

The discussion of the ministry at this time and by such men is itself symptomatic of an interesting condition in the church, the theological school, and the ministry itself. The three addresses may therefore be taken as the effort of the only purely undenominational theological school in the land to utter itself on the subject of the profession for which it is to train young men. It will not escape attention here, that these addresses are not delivered by members of the Faculty themselves. It will also appear that one of them is delivered by a layman, the particular layman, in fact, whose personal attitude and influence may be said to have done more to discredit the standing of clergymen in the community than that of any

other man in America. No one who knows the history of President Eliot's attitudes toward religious institutions and leaders, in the last thirty years, will venture to question this statement, notwithstanding he has a son in the ministry, and is closing his illustrious career with what must seem to students of his intellectual history a distinct attempt at reversal of an influence which was distinctly felt throughout the land for twenty-five years at least.

It will be noticed, also, that a second of the three addresses was delivered by a member of a body whose popular interests are distinctly secondary in the church of which he is a member, and who himself, by tradition and interests, is allied to forms of application to fundamental concerns of the Christian gospel which must make his address, as an "appeal," worthless to any one who knows the facts. Even the most casual inquiry among industrial circles in Massachusetts will instantly bring this to light. The third was delivered by the only man of the three who may be said to know anything about the ministry as a life and as a whole life. And what this signifies for the discussion appears as the address is compared with the others. The present writer may say, in passing, that for all these writers he has the highest possible respect, being in some respects indebted to the great president of Harvard for many of the best intellectual possessions of his life. The not less great pastor of the Old South Church has been the intellectual and spiritual liberator of so many, that it is almost needless for any individual to state the fact, and nothing in this article is to be construed in any sense as other than an attempt to deal with what the present writer regards as the most fundamental Christian problem of our time.

President Eliot quotes Emerson's Divinity School address at Harvard, and gives assent to his ideal of the importance of

the ministry in the following paragraph, "that it [the ministry] is the first office in the world,—a holy office coeval with the world,—and that Christianity had given us two inestimable advantages, the Sabbath, the jubilee of the whole world, and the institution of preaching. This doctrine is just as true to-day as it was two generations ago, and it is my faith in it which leads me to-night to try to persuade you that more Harvard men should go into the ministry." Such a conception of the ministry—"a holy office," "the first office in the world," one "coeval with the world"—should surely have called from the maturest intellect in the oldest university in America a magnificent portrayal, one which should have been immediately productive in "more Harvard men for the ministry." The speaker, as he himself said, had watched the stream of young men going out from Harvard for fifty years, and has been near the center of most of the great movements which have affected the intellectual interests of America in that time. And religion being, as Dr. Gordon said, "a fundamental human interest," what the great president would say to young men thinking about the ministry, "a holy office," dealing with a "fundamental human interest," should have been of a character calculated to make the dullest nature thrill with expectation and attention. But what does the address offer?

President Eliot thinks that most of the trained young men of Harvard desire three things for themselves in their subsequent careers: (1) "to be serviceable to their families, their associates, and the community"; (2) "to be free to think, say, and do what they really believe in"; and (3) "to grow in efficiency and influence all through their lives." It is to live and work under these aims that President Eliot considers the ministry. One may well pause rather staggered that these, as the primary and fundamental ideas, should govern a man

thinking about the Christian ministry. And, were the personage uttering these things anybody but the president of Harvard College, one would be inclined to wonder whether he had any knowledge of the fire, the passion, the sacrifice, the suffering, the pain, and the travail out of which the Christian church has emerged into the modern world. One might even wonder whether such a person had in any true sense caught the spirit of the New Testament, so utterly alien to the spirit of the gospels, and the New Testament generally, does this point of view appear. It is not surprising, therefore, to find, a little later, that the logical development of this point of view appears in the statement "It must be confessed, however, that in many instances the salary of a country minister is too small to enable him to educate his family well, keep himself supplied with books and other means of intellectual growth, and acquit himself appropriately in his high function. Therefore, *well-trained young men who possess the needed mental gifts, and who also have some pecuniary resources either by inheritance or by marriage, ought to aspire to the occupation of the country minister, just as well-to-do young men are going into the profession of medicine not so much for the purpose of practicing medicine as of advancing medical knowledge and skill.*"

That paragraph contains the key to President Eliot's discussion. It has nothing of the idealism, the sacrifice, the love, and the self-surrender which historically have been the life and the power of the church and of religion, and simply considers in charming and delightful fashion the use of the ministry to a well-trained young man who has resources which make him independent of his salary, as a sphere of influence and an interesting and helpful occupation. The utter worthlessness of such an appeal cannot be expressed in words. It contemplates a social ideal and social relations which are

as repugnant to the average man as they well can be. They supply absolutely nothing to meet the commonest emergencies, which even the untrained exhorter knows how to meet and help because they are born out of experiences and necessities like his own. What the tent-maker of Tarsus would have thought if somebody had presented this ideal to him can be inferred only from the passionate language which he constantly uses to express his devotion to Christ and his love for the human beings whom he wishes to win to His cause. No clearer explanation of the utter paralysis of the ministry could possibly have been penned than this address. It reveals an abandonment of those great surrenders and those high and exalted feelings without which the history of the church would be a dismal record indeed. It would be hard to imagine a mother giving her son to the ministry or the mission cause on this plea. In fact, there is nothing to call out the powers of sacrifice whatever. President Eliot's minister makes no sacrifices. He must have the ability to educate his family, have the resources "by inheritance or by marriage" to enable him to supply himself with books and "other means of intellectual growth," and have the spirit not so much of saving the world or rescuing men as to "aspire to the occupation of the country minister," as other "well-to-do" young men go into medicine "*not so much for the purpose of practicing medicine as of advancing medical knowledge and skill.*" Fortunately for the ministry, not many "well-to-do" young men have undertaken the profession of the ministry for this purpose. This is not saying that there is no place in the ministry for "well-to-do" young men. It is saying, however, that to choose the profession of the ministry, at least the evangelical ministry, under the guidance and sway of such motives, should, as it inevitably would, discredit the candidate from the start.

Bishop Lawrence's utterance in this connection may as well be omitted entirely, as containing nothing specially illuminating to the question which President Eliot has not said better and with greater clearness and higher motive.

When the preacher and minister speaks, however, we have another note. When Dr. Gordon asks strong young men to take the cloth, he insists in his opening sentences that the man must be a man "whose chief interest in life is moral and spiritual." There you have something different. A strong man can at that point ask himself questions large enough and deep enough to take a lifetime to answer. And, adds the great preacher, "such men should be in the ministry because it is a fundamental human interest and should not be left in incompetent hands." Here you have the contrast between the view of the college administrator and the idealist preacher brought out at once. One wants to be serviceable, free, and to grow under kindly and happy and favorable conditions, and not specially to "practice" his profession; the other thinks of "human" interests, and takes the freedom and the serviceability to himself and his own and the rest as he can. "Religion," says Dr. Gordon, is the "sovereign interest of man"; and there you have it again. Every fresh statement points out that the claim of religion is an exclusive claim, or no claim at all. The man from the pulpit, the man who is thinking not of his own efficiency but primarily of the great task of lifting and liberating the world, demands that the minister's chief interest be moral and spiritual, and more, that it be a "sovereign" interest. But not only so. "His great aim in the presentation of ideas is to affect the heart. His chief purpose is to make character after the type of Jesus Christ." That is, again, a note which reveals at once the fundamental and essential difference in these addresses. The remainder of the dis-

cussion accords with it, and constitutes a fine though rather restrained appeal; but it is an idealist's invitation, and squares with the New Testament. That can be said for neither of the other two addresses. Taken as a whole, a more unsatisfactory document to put into the hands of the right sort of young men could hardly be devised than this series of addresses, if the young man to whom they are addressed is to have any of the enthusiasms, the devotion, and the self-sacrifice of the New Testament leaders and the heroes of the church's service to the world, or meet the demands of the modern world for spiritual leadership and power. On the contrary, it is precisely the kind of a statement which would take out of any youth moved upon by the fine idealism and abandon of the New Testament history exactly that which would make him a preacher to the hearts of men. Taken as it stands, it is confirmatory evidence of the fact that the "professional," instead of the "human," ideal of the ministerial calling is the one which prevails in the theological schools. What the preacher and idealist suggests in its opening pages the remaining discussions steadily dash down and destroy.

A clearer and much more penetrating analysis of the situation of both the church and the ministry was that of the late Mr. Godkin, who simply put the whole case in a nutshell when he said that the church and her ministry must live up to its ideals of itself, and that is all there is to it. What Mr. Godkin would have said if somebody had proposed to him going into an editorial chair not so much for the purpose of writing editorials as adding to editorial knowledge and skill, can readily be conjectured. What Mr. Beecher or Phillips Brooks would have said about going into the ministry not so much to practice it, that is being ministers, as to add to ministerial knowledge and skill, because you happen to be well enough

off to afford it, in spite of the small salary, can also readily be inferred from what both these great pulpit leaders have said about their calling. The simple truth is, that when the ministry is regarded as a profession simply, it ceases to be the ministry of the New Testament, the ministry of Paul, or Peter, or John, or any one of the representative figures of the gospel history. Such a view-point involves the distinct abandonment of what constitutes the strongest sustaining force in the life of clergymen, namely, that, in the grand total of human life, the self-sacrifice, the self-abnegation, the decay and atrophy of many fine powers and high gifts, for the actual life and service of men, is justified because religion is sacrifice or it is nothing. The present writer has as great a longing that ministers should have physical comfort, financial support in adequate measure, the possession of books and "other means of intellectual growth," as anybody, knowing some of the deprivations of these things, as most working ministers do; but he, and most ministers worthy of the name, would regard it as a libel upon their lives to have these things or any of them brought into the foreground of their purposes, either in going into or staying in the ministry.

Steadily, with increasing insistence, the modern world is saying to the representatives of all its institutions, Justify yourselves in the vital life of your time; prove that you are sufficiently contributory to the life and necessities of men, that they may regard you as among their vital things; and with crushing insensibility to all traditional pretense and clamor it is eliminating whatever cannot so justify itself. And this justification is not merely utilitarian justification. The fact that the ministry is a "non-productive" profession will not in the slightest degree invalidate its claim to support, and full support too, in this scrutiny for justification in the vital life of

the time. As a matter of fact, where there is such a ministry, it receives full support and receives it ungrudgingly; and where such institutions exist they have their natural allies and supporters quite to the degree that can properly be required or expected. But the main point to be noted is, that it has become a pragmatic world into which we have emerged, and the pragmatic test is the one which will, from now on, be applied to all who derive their support from the voluntary gifts and choices of men. It will be not less so, as time advances, in those things which are supported by the state, because the enlightened judgment of the citizens will demand of their state servants and their state institutions exactly the same things, applying the same test, namely, Justify yourselves in the vital life of the time. It is not utility that this pragmatic spirit longs for: it is vitality. It is not to produce profits, but to produce life. Not to make fortunes, but to enrich life. Not to create knowledge, skill, or even higher types in any class or calling, except as such types prove that they have more vital relation to the stream of life, in which the masses of men move and have their being. It is an age when democracy is determined to be a vital democracy, and not merely an academic dream.

It is in the light of the characteristics of such a period that the question of the kind of a ministry which we need, and the proper equipment of such a ministry, is to be solved. And it will not be wasted time to ask ourselves a moment, what the outstanding characteristics of a pragmatic age are. Such a definition necessarily cannot be complete, because such an age must constantly be undergoing substantial and very extensive changes, as the various vital questions of society come to the front and receive their proper accent to the maintenance and development of the whole social body. But an outline

can be presented which will be sufficiently indicative of the thing we have in mind.

In the first place, then, a *pragmatic age will be distinguished mainly and primarily by its intellectual and moral impatience with theories of conduct or thought or education which do not tend to become immediately productive in higher social ideals and practice.* Men are still living who can remember when *laissez faire* had its exponents in political economy, but the species is almost extinct. Everywhere in the highly civilized nations the most astounding spectacle which confronts us is that the great social revolutions which are taking place in jurisprudence, in state activities and social administration, are originated by the classes least qualified to administer them, and while the capable and the educated upper fractions are reluctantly being forced to learn how to do what obviously they will have to do, or be swept out of existence. Notice, for example, how reluctantly the great corporate interests in our own country make the changes which the moral sense of the masses is demanding. Notice how generally the great names in finance, as in many other great interests, are connected with ideals and habits, predatory or privileged, which they find it hard to see are doomed. A natural supposition would be, that, seeing this raging storm, they would meet it by reforming, root and branch, when, as a matter of fact, every one knows they are doing only what they have to do, and no more.

Now the social and the moral sense—and the two are becoming strangely allied—are more and more impatient with promises of a new earth wherein righteousness shall prevail, when no symptoms of its coming are presented. It is not that this generation seeketh a sign, but that it refuses the humbugs of other ages, which find exemplification in pious nonsense,

in titles and degrees, and the whole paraphernalia of privilege. If anybody thinks that a \$29,000,000 fine for crimes that have cost life and happiness to thousands will satisfy this instinct, it shows great inability to comprehend what the masses of mankind are thinking. Just as the courts have finally waked up to the fact that they must administer something resembling justice, the churches must awake to the fact that they must offer something that resembles religion in its vital and commanding form. What made the apostolic company so tremendously effective was, that they were so tremendously vital. "For me to live is Christ," said Paul; and every minute of his turbulent existence showed that he simply stated the truth. The recent trial at Boisé showed that, whatever the precedents were, justice had to be administered; and it is likely that there never has been a case in America where the rules of evidence were so cavalierly handled as in that trial. But that had to be a court of justice, first and foremost. And this represents exactly the spirit and temper of the age. Complaint is made, and properly made, that great liberties are being taken by certain reform administrators with some of the laws. But in Anglo-Saxondom certainly, the mere fact that injustice was written into the statute-book has not been taken as a signal for submission. Now this spirit is abroad in the whole modern world. It will not longer lie down pacified while Compromise, whether he be a judge on the bench or a preacher in the pulpit, promises in dignified, studied, sonorous phrases that a golden age is to come, and that "thus saith the statute." An age has come when the value and possible beauty of life properly trained and rightly fitted to the world are comprehended as among the immediate possibilities of attainment. Immortality is known now not to be a justification for needless pain and

humiliation. Because there will be absolute justice in the world to come, is not a good reason for enduring with patience obvious and unrestrained injustice in this world. This is not because we value the life to come less, but the life that is more. That is the grand discovery of the pragmatic age; and it will not, with this knowledge and with these possibilities staring it in the face, be patient with the platitudes of religion or the equally platitudinous maxims of outworn legal procedure. Law must mean more and more justice. Religion must mean more and more spiritual life. And if the laws do not mean justice, they will be broken and flouted, and something else substituted in their place. And if the churches do not mean something vital, they will be discarded, and something that does stand for vitality in religion substituted for them. The portion of society that is satisfied, because it has the enjoyments, the comforts, and the luxuries of this world, and that also means, in large part, the beauty, the charm, and the refinement both as to intellect and physique, of course will term all this revolutionary. But just as any American election would be called a revolution in Russia, so this impatience, so far from being merely like digging the stuffing out of a doll to find out what is inside, is the awakened human spirit finding out what is vital, and demands that what it supports, shall tend to become immediately operative in the life of men. It will not be referred to another world in religion, and it will not be referred to the precedents of the Roman or any other ancient law, unless these are immediately and vitally suggestive of new life here and now. This is the outstanding instinct of the pragmatic spirit. It does not despise the legitimate processes of time, but it refuses to allow ignorance, stupidity, and privilege to lurk behind and under them.

It is of the nature of religious instruction and the profession that has to do with furnishing it, that in such an age it will be the first to suffer if it does not measure up to the needs and opportunities which are uppermost in men's minds. President Hyde admirably expressed this idea before the International Council at Boston in 1899 when he said: "It is of little use to preach to a world whose ways of thinking you do not understand. The minister must wrest the scientific concepts of his age direct from the laboratory. No textbook or lecturer giving them in finished form will serve his purpose. He must wring from the library, out of the conflict of opinion and clash of hostile schools, the economic, sociological, and literary treasures it contains. By wide reading, eager discussion, sharp criticism, he must make his own the philosophical ideas of the world. To a mind dead to the ethical, social, literary, political, and philosophical issues of his own day and generation all the exegesis in the world cannot make the Bible a living book. . . . Without this first-hand knowledge of science, philosophy, sociology, and ethics a man may be an exhorter, but he cannot point out in terms of the literary ideals the ethical insights, the social conditions, and the philosophical conceptions of his age, *the precise form which the better life should take.*"

In this last phrase is found the crux of the whole matter. What a pragmatic age wants to know is the precise form which the better life should take, and the man whose business it is to urge the better life must have a form for presentation which is grounded in the language, the habits of thought, the immediate needs, and the ruling ideas and hopes of the men to whom it is presented. Such leadership the ministry of the apostolic age supplied, and the remarkable mobilization of the church in the earliest period of her history was due to the

fact that she knew her theory of her own life, and illustrated it, and had the answer and the form for the age to which she was preaching. This is exactly what the ministry and the churches of our day are not doing in any degree commensurate with the necessities of the social tension, the political confusion, the ethical perplexity, which are everywhere staring us in the face.

While these lines were being written, a decision had just been handed down from the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts concerning a fraudulent foreclosure and sale of certain property by and between two corporations in a New England city. The trustees who had the matter in charge and who were responsible for the transaction, on being sued by parties whose equity was stolen thereby, were men of absolutely the highest repute in the city, men naturally chosen to administer the most sacred trusts, two of them presidents of banks, one a savings-bank having over seven millions of dollars in its keeping; yet the judge, in making his decision, pronounced the fraudulent proceeding "a shameless transaction," and actually told the plaintiff's attorney that no argument was necessary since the fraud was so transparent and shameless. What sort of a message could these gentlemen have been listening to week by week that makes it possible for them to engage in what a Massachusetts supreme judge calls "a shameless transaction"? Here, again, perhaps the explanation is adequately given by another speaker at the same International Council, President Slocum, who said: "Perhaps the most serious defect in the theological seminary, strange as it may seem, is the subordinate place given to ethics. . . . Possibly this may well help to explain why at times there is *in the church great inertia when serious moral movements demand support, and also why such movements*

often find their best leaders outside of the church . . . The serious complaint is made against ministers, however, that, with few notable exceptions, they have too little sympathy with those movements which lie just outside the ordinary social and moral boundaries of the church."

President Slocum and President Hyde thus laid their hands upon the sore spot with sure and exact touch nearly nine years ago. But does anybody know of anything decisive or suggestive that has been done among us in the last nine years, to meet what was then merely resented, but not answered, as a true description of the ineffectiveness of the religious forces of to-day? When the gentlemen of highest repute in a fine Massachusetts city are pronounced by its highest court as engaged in shameless fraudulent transactions, and the *status quo* of these persons in the community remains unaltered, both socially and religiously, nobody need be surprised to see the church scorned as an ethical interpreter, nor the minister derided as an incompetent or helpless leader of a forlorn hope. But theoretically the ministry is a social instrument suited to and designed to meet precisely such a need. It is a calling which, whatever its alliances and faiths in another life, whatever sanctions it may hold as to the next world, is preëminently set to deal with the visible and immediate work of liberating, instructing, rescuing, and molding human life after the pattern and under the inspiration of Jesus Christ. Yet its ethical influence is constantly diminishing, and its quasi-alliances with the representatives of predatory wealth and its joyous acceptance of gifts from quasi-criminal leaders of corporations under indictment and other public plunderers have served to produce something like a feeling of horror-stricken sickness among the faithful and loyal masses who know these things to be assaults upon

the spiritual integrity of both the church and the ministry, and yet are often too helpless to utter and make effective that resentment. This is the righteous kernel that is "hanging" on, hoping for better things. But meanwhile one minister furnishes a splendid son to a national administration, a brilliant organizer and reformer in the Post-office Department, another furnishes an equally magnificent son as commissioner of corporations, and both ring out in the *public service* the message which, by all natural tradition, these men should have been able to utter as ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the pulpit of the Christian church. Why did not these men, who are arousing the nation to an ethical sense of public service, follow their fathers into the Christian ministry? There are reasons,—solid, profound, and in part pitiful reasons!

It is very easy to see that this state of equipment cannot have the qualities which are ready to respond to the immediateness of the demand which is everywhere expressing itself for precision of utterance and definiteness of direction. The highly ethical interest of the age and the intensity of the ethical element in all the problems which are accented during this time call for a developed ethical sense, and especially for matured ethical knowledge. But, as a matter of fact, upon the great majority of the questions over which the public mind has been agitated in recent years, the church and the ministry have had little to offer but ethical platitudes. And, as a result, men have sought other avenues for action and for utterance. This is the real reason why the highly gifted men of the time have not sought the ministry. There are others, of course, but the ministry is a pragmatic calling, if it is anything. The bodily acceptance of the German ideals and methods of theological preparation and instruction, whatever

they produced in mental power and strictly theological knowledge, have, as the American churches well know, resulted in a ministry whose habits of thought and points of views have been utterly outside of the intense and direct moods in which the American people habitually move. As a result, when a belated attempt has been made to deal with these things, it has transparently revealed its immaturity, incompetency, and opportunism. Moral and spiritual power for reformation under such circumstances is of course impossible. The ministry of to-day must have command of all the first-hand secular knowledge that the dominant politician, the ruling financier, or commercial despot has, and he must be able to match an economic equipment of first-rate ability against their brazen and deliberate attempts to befog the public mind, and to this knowledge he must add a magnificent daring, which will utter what his equipment teaches him is the moral interpretation of the issues he deals with. Without these he has no mission to a pragmatic age.

Another of the great characteristics of this age is the rapid and steady elimination of waste from all the processes of production and distribution. In a lesser degree and scope, but with no less interest and purpose, it is also seeking to eliminate life waste. It is here that the enormous failure of the ministry and the church comes into view in a most depressing exhibit. No candid and capable administrator of any church to-day but knows that by far the larger part of all the agencies at work in the given church are spent, not in making advances, but in holding together what has already been gained. He also knows that, in every church, agencies are maintained, and services are kept in motion, and practices are continued from which the vitality has long since departed, and which constitute a drain on the life energies of the

church, making a waste absolutely without justification. After nearly sixteen years of agitation the Congregational benevolences are administered in a way which must, as the economic question grows in intensity and acuteness, become more and more shamefully wasteful. Its societies and its treasuries, its secretaries and its hosts of representatives, are utterly out of proportion to the service which these render to either the causes they represent or the churches from which they derive their support. Congregationalism has in nothing shown its helplessness more than that it has taken more than sixteen years to get this problem fairly before the churches. Nobody the present writer knows expects to see anything accomplished toward the elimination of this waste for sixteen years more. But the money loss and the loss arising from this administration is the least loss. The greatest loss is that the system is preventing the building up of a continuing constituency. Ask any pastor of twenty years' standing whether the men he knows who have arisen in the church in the last twenty years have anything like the same standards of giving, and the same sense of responsibility for the kingdom at home or abroad, as the men who, past middle life, trained in the older forms before the present ruling age tendencies matured, are still maintaining. Look over the councils and general assemblies, and ask, Where are the young men? Ask why the younger men are not there in power, with enthusiasm, and with splendid energies in action for the kingdom of God. and you will soon discover that there is no place for them unless they abandon the ideals, the skill, the genius for organization, and most of all the power for eliminating needless and unjustifiable expense and waste, whether in money, time, or strength. The labor-saving device, the time-saving appliance, the quick intercommunication, the immediate and fruitful touch between

principal and subordinate, between the producer and the market, between the subject and object of modern life, are all wanting when we come to examine the method and spirit of the church and the minister dealing with the spiritual need and the ethical demands of the age. But this seems to be just the minister's business. His calling here again seems to be, rightly viewed, an instrument peculiarly adapted to meet the necessities of the case. He faces an audience fifty-two times in the year, a privilege which nobody else in the world has in exactly the same way. His theme is as large as mankind and as great as the gospel of Jesus Christ. The institution of preaching seems made to be the one instrument to bring about just the results for which the age is clamoring. But too often the pulpit is dumb, or, as the president of Colorado College remarks, the minister's vision is bounded by the lines of his own church.

This want of readiness and adaptation is unquestionably in part due to the feeling that to offer a precise form or to advocate a particular remedy limits the minister and destroys the universality of his message. He is afraid to be a "poor man's" preacher, or a "political" preacher, or a "social" preacher, or a "rich man's" preacher, or some other particular kind of a preacher. But has anybody ever seen a preacher of any power who was not a particular kind of a preacher? Was or was not Mr. Beecher a particular kind of a preacher? Phillips Brooks was so particular a kind of a preacher, evidently, that nearly half the Episcopal convention of Massachusetts voted against him for the bishopric. Does anybody think of Dr. Parkhurst and Dr. Cuyler as of the same type and kind? Who would dream of classifying Dr. Gordon with Dr. Hale, or Dr. Gunsaulus with Dr. Reuben Thomas? Yet each of these great preachers would most em-

phatically resent, and deny most righteously, that he had surrendered his universality as a preacher of the gospel because he had an accent which is distinct, clear, unmistakable, and all his own. But we have not yet, so far as the social problems and necessities of the time are concerned, made these differentiations, except in notable exceptional cases. In political economy and social economics the distinctions have already begun to be made; for example, as Professor Commons has said, President Hadley is the economist of the classes, while Professor Ely is the economist of the masses,—a very true and descriptive alignment. The church, however, must reflect the spiritual differences as well as the spiritual unities of mankind. The ministry must find all the accents, and its universality lies not in the suppression of all but the platitudes, from which nobody dissents, but in its utterance of all the positive doctrines which anybody may rationally and reasonably hold. Not to do this constitutes a waste in not employing energies and life power, which will belong to the church and grow and fecundate in the church, if utterance and fertilizing nurture are given to them.

In spite of the grotesque and often absurd use made of the expression "the man who does things," that represents exactly what the age is trying to discover. It is willing to listen to theories that emerge. It has not use for any mere theory because it is interesting and diverting. And let it be stated once more, that this is not utility nor the instinct of production merely. It is something deeper and wider than all this. It is the appreciation of the worth, the possibilities, and the vastness of the forces contributory to the beauty, the charm, and the richness of life. Asked by a committee of employers the other day to choose between a cut in hours of labor and an increase of pay, the committee of the highly in-

telligent labor which was thus interrogated, instantly replied, "The cut in hours"; for, as they explained afterward, the increased leisure for the men would result in their deeper understanding of their capabilities and possibilities, and would develop the character and knowledge which would make the increased *pay* inevitable. This is the pragmatic spirit. It sees that the worth is in life, that power is in life, that the ultimate gains lie in the quality of life, and its constant ceaseless quest is for life, abundant life. And this was what Christ came to bring. Do his ministers dispense it in accordance with his teaching and example?

Another remarkable and urgent development of the period through which we are passing in which the attitude of the ministry to the movement is of the greatest moment to the ministers themselves, may be described as the democratization of the higher functions of life and society. We can all remember the time when music and art and the higher problems of thought, especially the questions which involve the most stable and important of human relations, like marriage, children, education, and the like, were discussed by, and authoritative voices were heard only from, what are called the higher classes. But within the last quarter-century this has greatly changed. The "masses" have discovered that a man who lives fifty years in the most exclusive academic circles in the land may be a total ignoramus when it comes to the actual life which they and millions like them live. They know now that the doctrinaire theologian may know nothing about practical religion, and they also know that the "professor" of anything may simply be a man who has spent a great deal of time in finding out things which have been obsolete for many years. The former head of one of the great railroad systems of New England used to be

fond of relating how, in the matter of electrifying certain railroads, he consulted eight men, seven of them "professors," and one a man who had been reared on the road, and that, when he came to try the results of all the reports on a given problem, all the "professors" were wrong and the "uneducated" workman was right. This does not prove that education is wasted, but merely proves that there are several kinds. The same thing is true about certain great subjects, and in fact concerning many of the higher interests of life. It was impossible that the lower classes of men, so-called, should not find out sooner or later how loosely the upper classes regarded the common precepts of morality and fair dealing. And the people who are now clamoring about "labor tyranny" would do well to look a little into the history of the way in which the vested interests have behaved in the past forty years. Indeed, the current reports of the investigation of the Standard Oil Company will do much to educate the custodians of the higher interests of society that these interests must become democratic as well as others. The politicians learned this rather earlier than others, for which reason the boss flourished, because he knew the masses better than their more "respectable" friends. This is the reason why the parties tumble over each other in their haste to placate "labor" and other popular interests.

One needs also only to consult the librarians of the cities to find out who is reading the economic works in these institutions, and such an inquiry will generally reveal the rather remarkable fact that the workmen of the land have now a better economic knowledge for the most part than the employing classes. When they are equally expert in mobilizing their differences and acting in concert, a new economic era will dawn on America, and that day seems at hand. The

absurd and immoral doctrine for many years dinned into American ears under the name of "protection," if it persists, is going to mean protection in fact to those whom it has for so many years befooled. The element of "labor cost" is going to get a kind of consideration which will make the old-time protectionist stare indeed to find out that it is going to mean what he always said it meant, but never intended that it should mean. The growing and extensive patronage which popular music festivals and popular art exhibits receive, and the increasing discrimination which the masses are showing in these matters, must also arrest attention among the custodians of religious life and discipline. Here again, if one will simply ask the people who have managed such things with intelligence and observation, he will find that one after another of the so-called "higher interests" of society have begun to feel the democratic touch and have begun to respond to it. Literature has long since surrendered to it, the first stage of course being the rude and disgusting commercial stage, which seems to be gradually giving way to a better outlook. The ten-cent magazine and the cheap book have of course demoralized the old-time publishing autocrat, and made authorship something less awe-inspiring than it used to be. But it has set many pens to writing; and, after all is said and done, out of all this effort, sooner or later, a disciplinary and cultural stage will come.

Now all these things have had their effect upon religion and religious institutions no less. Religion is the highest interest of man, a "sovereign" interest, and the dilettante who undertakes simply to "raise the standard of the profession," having a private income which will enable him so to do, might as well undertake to throw Vesuvius into the sea as to try to meet in this manner the real demand of

modern society for a religious leader. And let it be understood that, although much is said in this article about the "masses," the solidarity of the human race is such that, in the end, what most people want and need is the thing which everybody will have to give premier consideration. And in a democratic society that is especially true, because steadily the demand of the whole must be the supreme demand. If one chooses to be abnormal, he may be so even to the extent of having a "higher" life and a more rarefied moral and spiritual code; but he will pay the price which democracy will require for such luxuries. But the question for the Christian minister is to ask himself, whether in his New Testament there is not exactly the same moral attitude which he finds so insistently expressing itself in the economic and social world! Whether, in a great degree, it has not come about by familiarity with the true inwardness of the message of Jesus Christ; and whether he himself somehow has not lost touch with the pragmatic message of Christianity, in the endeavor to uphold what he may have mistakenly conceived to be the real essence of the gospel, but which was really his own particular hobby, and not a very effective or wholly admirable one at that. It may safely be said, that the charge that Protestant Christianity has lost the spirit of democracy is the one charge that is truest, and the one which has done it the most damage in the estimation of most men. "The churches are the rich men's club," say the masses of men. Indignantly as we may repel this charge, in substance it is true, and nobody who knows the history of the manner in which most churches are governed, directed, financed, and bullied by a very small fraction of their membership will care to deny the fact, whatever may be wrong about the particular way in which the matter is vocalized. Few ministers but know as well as they know

anything that the price of harmony and success is to "keep in," as a prominent college president put it, with the officers. Whether these persons are persons with whom a man attached to the gospel ideas and ideals ought to "keep in" is another matter. In every church, as in every community, the common pulse soon feels whether the minister's heart beats for it, and then it looks to see whether his voice is going to utter what his heart feels. It is the supremest folly to imagine that the public does not know its man. It may be mistaken for a little while, and may be hoodwinked, as it is in politics and other things; but it inevitably comes to know whether the man who stands for the gospel of Jesus Christ is really a servant of that gospel, or a man of straw who says the words, but who has none of the spirit. "Look out for that man," said Mirabeau, to a group of amused nobles who were in the gallery watching the fearful mane of Robespierre shake with rage while his tongue poured out threats against the higher orders of France, "*he means what he says*," as France came to know, and perhaps some of those men to whom the remark was addressed. "*He means what he says*," said the secretary of a great New York conference, when a clergyman invited a woman representative of certain labor interests to call upon him and take lunch or dinner with him whenever she happened to be in the city in which he lived. Inquiry revealed the fact that this particular lady had often had similar things said to her, when her interesting, convincing words concerning the interests which she represented had been heard, but again and again she had also learned, to her sorrow, that they were the mere externals of courtesy, from which the life had gone. "*He means what he says*" is the great tribute which men can give to anybody. If the minister means what he says, and says what the life and the message

of Jesus Christ authorize him to say, and applies with clearness, with candor, with a free heart, and without malice, the truth which Jesus came not merely to teach but to live, no power on earth can prevent him from having his audience, his fellow-workers, his success among men as a soul-lifter and a soul-winner; and not all the powers in earth and hell combined can prevent him from having joy in his work and the solid satisfaction of true manhood's endeavor to apply human life, human emotion, human thought, and human suffering to the magnificent task of saving the world from its sin, its injustice, its shame, and its pain. But it must be an achieving love of truth and men. It must be a passionate self-sacrifice at any cost. It must be all things, to all men, that by all means it may save some. It must know and live and preach a gospel which is as democratic as the gospel of Christ. It must not shrink in times of danger or crisis. It must not hesitate to denounce wrong, and it must not shrink from the return thrusts of the entrenched and powerful advocates of social injustice. It must rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be instant in prayer! It must have the faith and the courage to move mountains! It must win first the great victory over personal pride, personal ambition, and personal glorification. These won, the rest is easy enough. Mankind is greater than any sect, any creed, any faction, or any breed of particular men; and whoso will speak for man will always win the love and coöperation of men.