

tical exposition of the scriptures. They now understand that, underlying this thing called a creed, there is a spiritual life, the nature of which is intended to fit into our own, in its daily existence, and they want this as the spiritual food from the pulpit. Spiritual christianity means something, and the pew holders want it preserved and presented. It will be understood that a demand like this, and one that is gaining strength each year, will shut out from the work of the ministry, the hundreds of men, who, judging them from their work in the pulpit, and their daily lives, have entered it as an occupation, merely, something that yields them a living, easy in cases, and which may be entered or abandoned, just as the individual chooses. Generally speaking, the ministry has been accepted as one of the learned professions, but the conditions of the work have been of such an attractive nature that a good many men have become occupants of the pulpit, who, so far as scholarly attainments are concerned, have no fitness whatever for the work of preaching. Almost every reader of this article can recall the names of such men in his immediate neighborhood. Some of them may have a couple of D's affixed to their name, but in these cases, it is a cheap-John affair, for which the faculty of some inferior educational institution was "worked" successfully. Such men would be fairly good farmers or merchants and general business men, in the ordinary sense; but as pulpiteers, they cut no figure, except where the congregation is made up of people who are behind the age; though in the midst of it.

The lamentable, in this case, is not more the lack of scholarly attainments, and the needed superior knowledge of scripture, than the almost entire absence of clear spiritual instincts; a heart that is pure, and receptive of pure things, to the exclusion of quite all else; a clear vision of things spiritual and divine; a mind wholly in accord with the mind of the Master. Very few of such men but imagine that they are in full and uninterrupted possession of all these superior qualifications. The imagination is fearfully and wonderfully made in such men. When they come into the pulpit, their measure is accurately taken by an intelligent auditor. They are either long, dry and insufferably dreary; they are loud and muscular and essay the dramatic; they attempt high sounding words and phrases; or they have gathered from the scatterings of the so-called evangelist for the occasion. In the last case, it is the amateur's endeavor to be sensational. It generally amounts to a brief literary strut. Some of these gentlemen in black have an idea that the modern mind has, in them, come to its fullest and best, when, as a matter of fact, and so far as concerns the ideal modern minister, there is very little mind at issue. They talk, talk; yet they say nothing. They pile up words enough, but there is not the faintest clue to a rugged, honest, manly thought, to which thinking humanity can cling. They have no knowledge of what we call the finer sensibilities of the spiritual nature, and which are sensitive only to the touch of spiritual genius.

In defiance of the fact that, through the possession of the pulpit by so large a class of men of this character, this instrument of public education in spiritual things is not as effective as it ought to be—the church continues to admit them. I recall a case, appropos of this thought, occurring during the past year. A young man was converted during a revival season, in this state, and, in less than a week after that incident, it was announced that he was to preach. His life, up to this change, had been that of a young man of ordinary business. He had no school training of any particular