

evidently gone into the pulpit with little professional culture, with less of that awakened energy of mind and feeling, and still less of a free and hearty experience of real, practical life, that higher spirit of sympathy. Certainly he has had little of what we call a wide and varied intercourse with his fellow creatures. His knowledge of human nature is limited. A man may sit housed up in his study and work hard upon the subject of human nature, and in the end know nothing of it. As a general thing, preachers live too much alone or in society of each other, and do not mingle with the common, ordinary world of business stress and strain, where human nature may be found unadulterated. If I had a son, and was fitting him for the ministry, I would give him a couple of years in actual business, in and out of doors, and as many more in a newspaper office as a reporter. I would do this that he might study individual character. A man can only do this successfully in the street, shop, store, bank, concert hall, lecture hall, political gathering, manufacturing establishment, physician's office, police court, docks, everywhere, open to the reporter of a first-class newspaper. Here is where men are in earnest about the battle of life; here is the eloquence of real life action and life passion. The talk in all this vast arena of business never gets into books or the tapestry-hung study of the pastor. If it does, its freshness is gone, and it no longer illustrates principles of thought and speech; it is no longer eloquent with life.

Perhaps our man may have what in the technical is known as knowledge of life, but it is only in that sense. He exhibits a lack of it in the deep and broad sense in which the words have their right meaning, knowledge of the common every day joys and sorrows of the human heart; the realities of an affectional nature; pas-

sion and interest; the loves and hopes and trials which make up the common lot. Take this knowledge and baptize it with the spirit of the Master, and all that is good, and you have a live, earnest, sympathetic, eloquent, sinewy man in the pulpit. Without it, you have either a dry stick or a sensational strut. Among other things, the best advice to young men preparing themselves for any course of life, has been for them to study men first, and then books. It is this that makes preaching an art of life, and takes it out of the domain of abstract science, into which dull preachers thrust it. Experience is the chief end of man, and it is through experience that men are to be convinced. A preacher without a study of men in the midst of their business haunts and their perplexities, is a learned ignoramus. A man has the dry rot on him who undertakes to preach about human nature as he has learned it from books. People want freshness as a characteristic of the sermon. They rightfully complain of sermons that are repetitions of the same commonplace. If the pulpiter is to be interesting, and in that way persuasive, he must be able to take even the most familiar topics of the gospel, every aspect of which may have been worn smooth by constant controversy, and invest them with a newness and feeling. If he can do this, he will make the hearer feel himself in personal contact with this new idea, this world of thought and feeling opened up to him. The gospel never grows old, but is just as applicable to the man of to-day as to the personal followers of the Man of Nazareth, but it must be presented to him as it was of old, by those wholly and thoroughly fitted for the work. The man who goes into the pulpit as a "soft place," a place where he can keep his hands white, and be clothed in purple and fine linen, or with the idea that it is novelty and not a fresh, cultured, earn-