

of the old-fashioned clergymen, who conceive it to be their duty to preach moral and religious truth, with a view to influencing the lives and conduct of their hearers; and the same clergymen are understood to employ much of their time in such humdrum and commonplace work as the visitation of the sick, the consolation of the mourning and the relief of the poor. These vagaries probably spring from the old notion of a clergyman as a pastor, or a shepherd of the flock. But the popular preacher of to-day has been evolutionized, so to speak, far beyond that stage. He is a brilliant essayist, or humorist, or sentimentalist, as the case may be, who appears before an audience once a week with something which is calculated to interest and entertain them. Audiences do not gather to listen to unpleasant things about themselves, as preachers are likely to learn who proceed on the contrary theory; unless indeed the unpleasant things are put in such a spicy and telling way that each auditor can hug himself as he thinks how it fits some one else and how he must be feeling about it.

But the thing which most needs to be cultivated is heresy. We should especially counsel the Inquiring Theologian not to be afraid of it. The time has been when heresy entailed unpleasant consequences, but that was in the time when preaching was supposed to have some connection with the Scriptures instead of with popular follies and politics and the topics of the day. Nowadays heresy is the short cut to popularity. Let the young minister begin by dropping the suggestion that the author of the book of Genesis entertained very unscientific conceptions, and he will awaken an interest. Let him go on to question the authenticity of certain books of the Bible, and to intimate that most remarkable prophecies were written long after the events prophesied of occurred, and he will find his congregations increase. Then let him proceed to discuss Christianity in a broad and philosophic spirit as one among many excellent religions, and the Bible as one of a number of admirably written books, and he will gaze from his platform upon ushers filling the isles with campstools for the throngs who gather to hear him, and will find himself occupying columns of space in all the leading papers. These results

are not matters of conjecture; we could mention the names of several clergymen of no extraordinary ability, who plodded along in honest and useful obscurity until they struck a rich vein of heresy, when they became instantly famous.

Does the Inquiring Theologian remonstrate that all this seems to have little to do with preaching the Gospel, enlightening the blind and helping the needy? We admit that it is open to that objection.

But we have only undertaken to give a recipe for a popular preacher, and if we have omitted to include such matters as those just mentioned, it is because they have little to do with the art of popular preaching.—*Boston Journal.*

Coveteousness.

Hundreds of our church members, and with truth we might also say, numbers of our churches are being weighed down till every spark of Christian vitality is being crushed out of them by the abominable sin of coveteousness. An inspired writer informs us that "coveteousness is idolatry," and we should attack it as we would any other appearance of the same species. How many there are who will not be taught, and who will not be converted from their idolatrous worship of Mammon. Under our own personal observation have been presented instances when high dudgeon has been shown by those professing to love Christ, because the pulpit dared to attack this monster, this soul-cursing sin. We have seen men turn their backs upon all that was pure and holy, forsake the house of God, and neglect the hallowed institutions of the Lord's day, if the truth was known, for the simple reason that a faithful and fearless proclaimer and defender of primitive faith and practice had laid bare their niggardly, miserly, and grovelling propensities. But perhaps it is better that such should stay away from the privileges that belong alone to the true child of God; the church is better without such living contradictions; they have ever been and doubtless will continue to be till the end of time, cumbersome loads, obstacles and clogs to the advance of the church; and as surely as our Savior taught in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, that Dives had his good things in this life, but afterward was found destitute and suffering amid the tor-

tures of the damned; so sure must their destiny be the same. A religion, that in its effect, does not root out the sin of coveteousness, and yield the individual in his entirety to the service of God, is not the religion of the Bible. See to it brethren that this abomination is not the cause of your inactivity. There are many who do nothing for the cause of Christ, basing all their reasons on their so-called inability, while at the same time the sin of coveteousness with its attending circumstances and influences, is the shrine at which they are offering their daily and hourly service. Every excellence costs. Religion costs. Our religion appeals to the noblest powers and faculties of the soul. Sin and wickedness appeal to our lower faculties, and the measure of our Christianity is the measure of our ability to so govern ourselves as to keep all our lower faculties and passions and impulses in complete subjection to the higher principles of our being. In order to do this it costs us a perfect obedience and subordination of all our means, and talents, and lives of constant watchfulness and prayer to God for divine assistance in the great struggle for the higher life.—*The Disciple.*

Claims of God's House.

At a special church service in Louisville, Ky., the telephone was employed to convey the sermon and other exercises to the bedside of invalids. The circumstance suggests the possibility that some, not invalids, may utilize it in the same way. We remember the case of a brother who sat at an open window in his house, and listened to a sermon, rather than take the trouble to enter the sanctuary. And these two incidents bring up the matter of church attendance, which seems to require present and repeated consideration.

We understand that the worship of God in his house is, primarily, for his glory; that from the earliest times he has had courts for this particular purpose, and that there can be no substitute for the services to be performed therein, nor relief to those required to observe them. Every case of failure to conform to the divine will in this respect must rest for its justification on inability to comply. But notwithstanding the general recognition of this fact, public worship is too often or too much considered an expedient for religious enjoyment or entertain-

ment, to be observed in proportion to the degree in which this end is met.

It is easy to see where such a view leads, yet we fear that many do not open their eyes that they may see. The maudlin sentiment is expressed, that Christians may enjoy themselves at their homes, with their Bibles, as well as in the sanctuary that they see too much, or hear something that sets them back, when in the church. Such flimsy excuses point to a heart that is not in sympathy with the worship of God at all. Those who make them are not likely to show more respect for the Bible than for the house of God, which it so emphatically extols; and their professions of regard for the Scriptures are little else than religious airs. If they have not control over their visual organs in the house of the Lord, they are doubtless weak enough to entertain thoughts that wander like the fool's eyes, to the ends of the earth, when at home. There is no assurance that the members who are absent from public worship, unnecessarily, are engaged in anything that will promote their spiritual good or that of others.

The present is an important time for the consideration of this matter. Ministers are laboring to increase the religious interest in the churches and communities, and the faithful few are heartily sympathizing with them; but a great many, we fear the majority of the membership, are making their attendance upon the special services a matter of convenience, or deciding their course by the promise which the meetings give of interesting them. What is this but requiring that others entertain us, or forfeit their claim to our sympathy and help? What is it, if not saying that it is ours to receive, not give? Is it anything better than following the pastor afar off, and thus dishonoring the Shepherd and Bishop of souls? There is an influence attending our presence in God's house, which we have no right to withhold. Whether interested or not, if we are there, our influence favors religion. And the satisfaction rendered by the services, and their power for good, are generally in proportion to the number who participate in them.—*Christian Review.*

Beauty is truth, truth beauty. That is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.—*John Keats.*