THE

CLASSIC PREACHERS

OF THE

ENGLISH CHURCH.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT ST. JAMES'S CHURCH
IN 1878.

SECOND SERIES.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1878.

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LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

CONTENTS.

BISHOP BULL,

THE PRIMITIVE PREACHER.

"It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."—*Jude* 3.

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[The passages included in brackets were not delivered from want of time.]

THE above fragment of a verse seems to contain an epitome of the objects aimed at and the work accomplished by Bishop Bull, about whom I am to speak to you this afternoon. It brings before us the watchful shepherd of souls—the eager and

earnest preacher—the keen controversialist—the unhesitating and uncompromising champion of primitive orthodoxy.

Bishop Bull was all this, but he was something more. He was a noble type of a strong and wise and tender-hearted Christian man,—whose example was more eloquent than his sermons, whose faith had a deeper and more vital root than that of ecclesiastical tradition, and whose charity was wider and more comprehensive than he would perhaps have been willing, himself, to admit.

I believe that, following the precedent of those who delivered the last series of lectures from this pulpit, I should abstain from the attempt to give an account of Bishop Bull's life and character as a whole, and confine my endeavours to the task of setting before you a just estimate and appreciation of his rank as an English classic, and more particularly as an English preacher. But, seeing that a comparatively uneventful career and a historical prominence inferior to that of most of his great contemporary preachers seem to make it improbable that Bishop Bull will have a second lecture devoted to him, I venture to claim the liberty of prefacing my remarks with such a brief outline of his life as may conduce to a better understanding of his position as a religious teacher and divine.

George Bull was born about the middle of the reign of King Charles I., of a good old Somerset-

shire family of middle rank,—and devoted by his father at the baptismal font to the ministry of the Church. He got his early schooling, like some other famous men, at Peter Blundell's free school at Tiverton, and went up to Exeter College in Oxford at the age of 14. This was in the year of "the Martyrdom," as he would doubtless himself have called it, for he had imbibed from a most loyal father a strong belief in the doctrines of divine right and non-resistance. And indeed he was early called upon to suffer for conscience' sake, for in the second year of his residence, refusing to take the oath of fealty to the Commonwealth tendered to all members of the University, he was compelled to retire from Oxford, and without a degree, a fact which no doubt injuriously affected his advancement in his profession. The forcible dissolution of his connection with the University proved, however, in Bull's case, what Gibbon tries to make out that it was to himself, a substantial moral gain.* He had been a wild and idle boy at college, and soon acquired the character of a clever and disputatious, but not very satisfactory undergraduate. His retirement to a country village [with his Oxford tutor, who, though a red-hot Cavalier and bigoted ecclesiastic, was a man of worth and learning,—removed him from dangerous associations, and rescued him,

* Miscellaneous Works, vol. i. p. 108.

in all probability, from a wasted and frivolous life, though it may have contracted his sympathies, and imparted something of rigidity to his opinions. It also] brought him into contact with an elder sister of his own, to whose influence he gratefully attributes his first religious impressions, and the love of hard work which characterised him from this time forward. His father was now dead, and his guardians removed him into the care of a Puritan divine, but it was here that Bull first imbibed his love for Catholic antiquity, the son of his tutor having, at the risk of his father's anger, surreptitiously placed in the pupil's hands the works of Hooker, Hammond, and Grotius.

He ripened fast, and, like his episcopal predecessors, Ussher and Jeremy Taylor, was ordained under the canonical age—deacon and priest the same day—and then heard for the first time of his father's dedicatory vow. This was at the commencement of the Protectorate, and it must be confessed that in those days there were few temptations to an ardent young Churchman to enter the ministry;—the litany suppressed, the clergy socially degraded, temporalities confiscated, and episcopacy proclaimed unchristian. In the words of Bull's biographer, "he became a clergyman when the arguments from flesh and blood were least inviting, and rebellion and sacrilege rid triumphant."

Determined to have episcopal orders or none, he

applied to Dr. Skinner, the ejected Bishop of Oxford, and was secretly ordained by him in defiance of the law and its penalties. The same year he took temporary charge of Easton-in Gordano, a living [in the gift of the dean and chapter of Wells] so small in emolument that it had escaped confiscation. He remained a parish priest for just fifty years, about one half of which he passed as rector of Suddington, and the other as rector of Avening, both in Gloucestershire. Thus he underwent no apprenticeship, but he seems to have possessed an intuitive understanding of the details of parish work. He was one of those happy souls who early discover their true vocation, and, without hankering after possibilities of better things, throw themselves into it with the whole bent of their inclination and the whole force of their character. Doubly happy souls, to whom that vocation,—that first, last love of a life—is the ministry of the Church. "Spartam nactus es, hanc exorna" is the true motto of the country parson.

Bull seems to have had a genius, no less, for the pastoral office and the cure of souls. He appears to have anticipated by a couple of centuries the habitual use of many of those methods of parochial administration for the discovery or revival of which this age is apt to take credit to itself, and for the origin or adoption of which we should certainly look anywhere rather than to these dark days of the

Puritan tyranny. Such were public baptisms—careful preparing of candidates for confirmation—open-air preachings—observance of saints' days—a regular offertory—frequent communions, and catechising in church. Notwithstanding his absorbing love of reading, he never grudged his time to duty. He was a constant visitor of his poor in sickness and in health, and we learn indeed without surprise that "his charities were often in excess of his means," for during the whole time of his residence at Suddington his income from all sources was under £250 a year.* Moreover, he was married at four-and-twenty to a clergyman's daughter, who brought him twelve children, and with whom he kept his golden wedding the year before he died.†

There is an elaborate Life of Bishop Bull written by a pupil of his own, and published within three years of his death; but biography was not so well understood then as it is now, and though Nelson's work is worthy of all praise for its industry, minuteness, and unimpeachable

* Bull inherited an income of £200 a year, charged with an annuity of £50 to his mother. The united revenues of his two livings, Suddington St. Mary and Suddington St. Peter, were less than £100 a year. Lord Macaulay tells us (but he does not give his authority) that Bull's patrimony was spent in the purchase of books.—'Hist. of England,' vol. i. p. 331.

† This lady is described as the model of a clergyman's wife. The motto of her wedding-ring which she seems to have conscientiously lived up to was "Bene parere, bene parere, bene parare, det mihi Deus."

orthodoxy, he gives his readers very few of those individual traits and graphic personal touches which help posterity to reconstruct the image of the man as he appeared in the eyes of his contemporaries. Very few of his sayings, *one* only of his letters, have come down to us. Of his looks all that we can gather is that in extreme age he was a venerable blind old man, "with silvery white hair," and that in his younger days he was pale and thin, and compared by a neighbouring Nonconformist preacher to "one of Pharaoh's lean kine, which ate up the fat and the goodly, and looked not a whit the better."

His biographer cannot discover that he was ever "addicted to any innocent recreation, such as is necessary to unbend the mind and keep the body in health and vigour." His two keenest pleasures were his books and the enjoyment of conversation with his friends, in which he spoke freely of sacred things, and with less reserve and reticence as to his religious experiences than many altogether approved. But his study was the scene of his most exquisite pleasure, and "he would freely own, with great assurance, that he tasted the most refined satisfaction in the pursuit of knowledge that the present state of human nature is capable of, and that when his thoughts were lively and lucky in his compositions, he found no reason to envy the enjoyment of the most voluptuous epicure." He took the ten-

derest care of his wife and children, "though his conjugal affection did not discover itself in fond expressions, nor his paternal love in blind indulgence," but "when he did not 'spare the rod' he was sure to suffer more pain than he inflicted." Like many persons of a highly strung and affectionate nature, "he was liable to sharp and sudden fits of anger, which gave no less uneasiness to himself than to those concerned in the nearest offices about him; but when he was even most transported, no evil word ever escaped his lips, and the tenderness of his nature towards all his domestics at other times made sufficient amends to them." He entered into a compact with his curate that they should "mutually tell one another, in love and privacy, whatever each found amiss in the other. By rising early and going to bed late," we are told, "he secured time for his private devotions, and those who lay near his chamber discovered the warmth and importunity used in his spiritual exercises, when he thought all the family safe at rest; and the way he took sometimes to express the pious and devout affections of his mind by singing of psalms made it more difficult to conceal." Moreover, "he would frequently, in the daytime, as occasion offered, use short prayers and ejaculations; and when sitting in silence in his family, he would often, with an inexpressible air of great seriousness, lift up his eyes and his hands to heaven, and sometimes drop tears." He took par-

ticular delight "in recounting the happy and amazing escapes from danger of himself and his friends, and their unexpected successes" (all of which he attributed to the immediate interposition of the holy angels), "and invited others to tell what God had done for them, making such a noble use of these experiences by inference and exhortation that he made the hearts of his hearers burn within them."

It is pleasant to think of this noble, godly, and tender-hearted man, living thus through a quarter of a century of the worst of bad times, a life of apostolic poverty and simplicity,—his home a centre of religious light and warmth—a silent but eloquent protest against the hideous corruptions of the age. Like the great majority of the clergy of the Church of England, Bull had watched and prayed for the reinstatement of the Stuarts. He had even taken the extreme step of letting his rectory-house become the rendezvous of a secret society, whose object was to overthrow the Commonwealth and bring about the Restoration; but no sooner had the Government of Charles II. exhibited itself in its true colours, than Bull, almost alone of the royalist clergy, lifted up a prophet's voice to denounce the vengeance of God against the vices of the monarchy and the Court. With these exceptions, however, he kept altogether aloof from politics and public life, and would indeed have been equally cut off from the great world of cultivation and letters, had he not made it a practice to go up

for two months in every year to Oxford to store his memory and verify his authorities in the libraries there.

For by this time he had embarked deeply in religious controversy. His three great works are the 'Harmonia Apostolica,' the 'Defensio Fidei Nicænæ,' and the 'Judicium Ecclesiæ Catholicæ.' They were published at long intervals, but the intermediate times were taken up with replies to the attacks on these treatises, each of which provoked the widest and angriest discussion. It is on the basis of these three great monuments of human industry and research that the reputation of Bishop Bull chiefly rests, but it would be out of place to attempt a criticism or even a full description of them here. Suffice it to say that the 'Harmony of the Apostles' is an attempt to set at rest the secular controversy as to the reconcilability of the teaching of St. Paul with that of St. James, in reference to justification, whether by faith or by works.

[He finds the former saying that "a man is justified by faith without the works of the law;"* the latter, "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."† In the presence of this apparent contradiction, Bull assumes that St. Paul is to be interpreted by St. James, and finds in that apostle's "simplicity" the key to the *δυσνόητα*, the "hard sayings" of

* Rom. iii. 28. † James ii. 24.

St. Paul, of the obscurity of which St. Peter complains.* Works of righteousness are indeed necessary to justification, but not in any sense at all the cause of it, but merely a *sine quâ non* condition by God required in the Evangelical Covenant. On the other hand, the "works" condemned by St. Paul as ineffectual the context shows to be works of a ritual or moral character, not such as spring from faith and love. For the justifying faith of St. Paul is such a faith as implies and contains obedience, and *charity*, or love in action—a grace which he himself elsewhere places above faith. Charity may, in fact, be defined as the "form of justifying faith," without which it remains a lifeless abstraction, formless, unexpressed, and ineffectual. St. Paul declares "*nothing but faith, a living faith, can save.*" St. James only adds, "*and faith without works is dead.*" Imagine these theses expanded to the dimensions of a small quarto,—every statement, every term before its adoption, submitted to criticism, and supported by scriptural and patristic authority,—every rival hypothesis exhaustively scrutinised and condemned, —every error of fact or of expression hunted up and exposed with unsparing keenness and sagacity,—and you will be able to form some conception of the amount of disciplined energy which has gone to the production of this marvellous work.

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

The middle way is not always the path of safety. The publication of these opinions opened the floodgates of controversy. Their author was anathematised by Calvinists and Quakers on the one side, and by bishops and doctors of divinity on the other; and the next decade of his life was chiefly occupied in rebutting the charges of Antinomianism brought against him by the orthodox, and of "legality" by the Solifidians. He defended himself so well, however, in the opinion of the unprejudiced public, that at the end of that period he was, with general approbation, presented by the Chancellor to a prebendal stall at Gloucester.]

His next great work, the 'Defence of the Nicene Faith,' was called forth by a charge of Socinianism incidentally brought against him by an assailant of his 'Harmony.' This treatise is a complete *résumé* of the Arian and Athanasian controversy, in which Bull takes, as was to be expected, the highest Homoousian ground, and exhausts the resources of argument, of illustration, and of primitive authority in establishing the following propositions: "that the Son of God is consubstantial and coeternal with the Father, and, though coequal with Him in possessing the same Divine nature, is yet subordinate to the Father as deriving the Divine nature from Him."

[Some ill-informed Protestant writers had given a triumph to Socinianism by admitting the necessity of abandoning to the Arians most of the Fathers

who wrote before the date of the Council of Nice. What Bull undertook to prove was, that (so far from this being the case) the first Œcumenical Council had only explained and formulated what had been the universal and constant belief of the Church since the birth of Christianity, viz. the Divinity and consubstantiality of the Eternal Son.]

This work may fairly claim to be one of the greatest, if it be not itself the greatest, contribution to theological learning which has been made by the Church of England. It is no small tribute at least to its breadth and Catholicity, that whereas it was printed at the expense of the Bishop of Oxford, and rewarded by the University with the degree of Doctor of Divinity, Bossuet, then Bishop of Meaux, publicly referred a literary antagonist to Bull's treatise as a "completely exhaustive view of the mind of the ancients," and that antagonist (also a Roman Catholic) retorted on the author of the "Variations Protestantes" that Dr. Bull's observations and his own "were as like as egg to egg."

In 1694 he published the last of his great Latin treatises, 'The Judgment of the Church Catholic'; which though of considerable bulk and vast industry is no more than a supplement to the former, being a complete account of the heresies of the first three centuries, and a defence of the anathema directed against each by the Council of Nice. In this work it must be admitted that Bull has himself caught

something of the anathematising spirit, for he condemns, directly or by implication, some of the highest ornaments of literature and Christianity in and out of the Church.

Bossuet was so much struck with the importance of this work, that, notwithstanding the undisguised hostility of its author to the Church of Rome, he recommended it to the attention of the French bishops, and so general was their approbation that he was authorised to write a letter of congratulation to Dr. Bull in the name of all the clergy of France then assembled in synod at St. Germains, for the service which he had rendered to the Catholic Church. [The good Bishop, however, cannot refrain from expressing his own amazement that a man who had so exactly defined and so ably vindicated the position of the "true Church" should himself fail to acknowledge her, and wilfully continue excommunicate from her fold. This Parthian shaft took full effect, and drew forth from Bull the liveliest and most popular of the efforts of his pen, the 'Corruptions of the Church of Rome'; but the death of Bossuet while the answer was on its way deprives us of the satisfaction of knowing how it would have been received by the French hierarchy.]

Bull's reputation was at its height at the accession of Anne, and though the Queen herself and the Archbishop objected on the ground of his "great age," he was appointed, in his 71st

year, to the once metropolitan see of St. David's. It was a recognition indeed, a tardy recognition, of his services; but his work was nearly done, and he accepted the appointment only in the faith that "God proportioneth His gifts to the wants of those that depend on Him,—and the distributions of His grace are larger as His wise providence makes them necessary." He took his seat in the House of Lords when the debate on the Union was going forward, and made on that occasion a first and last speech, which, if short, was characteristic —"My Lords, I do think it highly reasonable that in this Bill a character should be given to our most excellent Church, for, my Lords, whoever is skilled in primitive antiquity, must allow it for certain and evident truth, that the Church of England is, in her doctrine, discipline, and worship, most agreeable to the primitive and apostolical institution."

The work which he accomplished in his brief episcopate was only sufficient to show how much the Church had lost by his not having been earlier called to that office. The see had lain vacant between five and six years, and he sadly felt that the harvest of work was, indeed, only too plenteous for the failing energies of the husbandmen. [Within three months of his consecration he started on a visitation, but was obliged to give it up, and subsequently employed a commissioner to deliver his charges. His confirmations, to which he attached great import-

ance, were confined to the neighbourhood of Brecknock, where he resided. He was so strongly impressed with the evil of lay impropriations, that he proposed to bring in a bill for their abolition, but was never again able to reach London.] His health was, in fact, completely breaking down, and blindness coming on. His constitution was naturally excellent, and his only excess had been in study, but the immediate cause of his death was a complaint only too clearly originating in his persistent habits of sitting up the greater part of the night at his books.

His faith and hope were exemplified in the long struggle of what had been an iron frame, with death by sheer pain and exhaustion. During a fortnight he underwent the most agonising sufferings, but with an intellect as clear and a spirit as unclouded and serene as at any time of his life. On one memorable occasion, believing that patience had had her perfect work and that the hour of release was at hand, he called his household round his bed, and "made a confession of his faith, in the words of the Apostles' creed. He then gave a short account of his life past, recounting its many errors and miscarriages, and blessing God for His dispensations towards himself, either of good or of evil things, in the whole course of his days." Then, taking a tender farewell of each, imploring the forgiveness of all whom he had injured, and declaring his own forgiveness of all who had

injured him, he summoned his failing energies to profess that, "as he had always lived, so now he was resolved to die, in the communion of the Church of England, believing it to be the best constituted Church, this day, in the world, for that its doctrine, government, and way of worship were in the main the same as those of the primitive Church." Churchmanship was not with Bull, as it is with most of us Churchmen, a sign of profession—a definition of principles, a watchword, a feeling, a characteristic, —what you will; it was the key-stone of his moral and intellectual being, the secret of his idiosyncrasy, the holy "ruling passion, strong in death." His friends who stood round his bed remembered that he had told them years before, in health and strength, "I would not be so presumptuous as to say positively that I am able to bear so great a trial, but according to my sincere thoughts of myself, I could, through God's assistance, lay down my life, on condition that all who dissent from the Church of England were united in her communion."

We have now followed Bishop Bull to the brink of the grave, and if it be thought that the story of his life has detained us too long from a consideration of his special work as a preacher, I can only urge in mitigation of judgment that his life is the best exposition which he has left us of his own creed, and that it is by his example, more than by his sermons,

that he being dead, yet speaks to us. For, indeed, he was greater as a theologian than as a preacher—greatest of all perhaps—though not according to man's measurement of greatness—as a parish priest and day-labourer in Christ's vineyard; and we may well believe what his biographer implies, that many a heart which his arguments and even his exhortations, failed to touch, took fire at the glow of his piety and love. Of the seven octavos which enshrine his labours, five are occupied with his Latin treatises, and one with a set of dissertations in English on kindred subjects. The single remaining volume contains his sermons, of which twenty only have been preserved, a small number, it may be thought, but even these were not originally written with a view to publication, and were collected by another hand. Sermons were more precious in those days than they are in these, and it has been said with very little if any exaggeration, that many a clergyman has now to produce a greater number of sermons in a twelvemonth than a divine of the seventeenth century had to produce in a lifetime.

On his well-known Visitation sermon "Concerning the difficulty and danger of the priestly office," he bestowed exceptional pains, and it may be interesting and instructive to examine it a little in detail, so as to be able to judge for ourselves—"ex pede Herculem"—of the general character of his discourses. There is nothing to help us to determine its date, but on the

one hand it is written before he became a bishop, and on the other it is evidently the outcome of a long and ripe experience in the ministry.

He begins with a strongly drawn and even deterrent picture of the dangers of the priestly office; but suddenly recollecting that it is too late to use such language, as he is preaching a visitation, not an ordination, sermon, he turns to and thenceforth enlarges on the best means of meeting and overcoming the dangers and difficulties which a clergyman must encounter.

First, there is danger from the constant use of the tongue. "The minister's tongue is a chief tool and instrument of his profession. He lies under the necessity of speaking much and often, and the Wise Man says truly that 'in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.'* They may become troublers rather than teachers of the people, whose tongues are indeed cloven tongues of fire, but not such as the apostles were endowed with from above. St. James tells us that if a man offend not in *word*, the same is a perfect man; as if he had said there is no way wherein we fall so readily into sin as by that slippery member, and there is no one more exposed to this danger than the teacher, who makes such frequent use of it,"—a warning, brethren, which we in these days may surely take to heart! Some of

* Prov. x. 19.

us, at least, of this generation are not likely to forget the earnestness with which Bishop Wilberforce used to warn his candidates for ordination against being led into talking too often, too much, and with little preparation, by the "snare of a perilous facility."

Again, the teacher's office has three essential requirements—large Knowledge, great Prudence, and exemplary Holiness. "Large knowledge, for he should have of that knowledge not only to spend, but to keep; not like those who live from hand to mouth, and whose stock is used up in a few sermons,—he should be like the householder who, for the nourishing of his family and the entertainment of his guests all the year long, is supposed to keep an ἀποθήκη, or repository of provisions of all sorts and kinds, new and old. This kind of hospitality (however, by the iniquity of an ungrateful and sacrilegious age, he may be disabled from exercising the other), is the indispensable duty of the pastor. He must keep a table well furnished with these heavenly provisions for all comers. That which he has undertaken to teach is the Art of Arts, the Science of Sciences, the Queen and Mistress of all other disciplines. (1) It embraces a Knowledge of speculative truth for the purpose of controversy; for the good shepherd's office is not only to feed his sheep, but to secure them from wolves: he must be able to convince gainsayers and deceivers, whose mouth, St. Paul says, must be stopped, otherwise they will subvert

whole houses, yea, and pervert whole parishes. In a word, our fate," says he, "is much like that of the rebuilders of Jerusalem, that were necessitated every man with one of his hands to work in the building, and with the other to hold a weapon. (2) The pastor's work embraces a knowledge of practical and moral divinity, without which practical knowledge a man deserves no more to be accounted a divine, than he a physician, who understands little or nothing of therapeutics.

"[Teachers, no doubt, are purposely placed by God in the crossways as Mercurial statues, not dead, but living, speaking ones, directing the perplexed traveller towards the heavenly Jerusalem. The priest should be such a one as Malachi * says—'that the people may seek the law at his mouth,' that is, the sense of the law; he should be a very oracle to be consulted by them on all occasions. It is true that the greatest oracle may sometimes be silenced by a greater difficulty, but an oracle altogether dumb is certainly a very lamentable contradiction.]

"But for the principles of all theology, whether speculative, moral, or casuistical, the Holy Scriptures are the deep and unsearchable mine, from which the teacher is to fetch all his treasure. He must needs be a weak divine who is not 'mighty in the Scriptures,' and Lord! how many things are necessary to

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* ii. 7.

give a man a right understanding of those sacred writings! It is no slender measure of the knowledge of antiquity, history, philosophy, that is requisite to such an undertaking. They know nothing of the Holy Scriptures that know not this. Again, it is not enough to be ready in alleging the bare words of Scripture with the chapter and verse, unless he know the sense and meaning of what he recites. The former every illiterate sectary is able to do who can quote Scriptures by dozens and scores, the tithe whereof he understands not, and are little to his purpose."

[This is doubtless a high standard of clerical attainment. Bull gives us, however, thus much of consolation: "God be thanked, this is only the heroic perfection, not the necessary qualification of a teacher, and a man may well content himself, to sit in a much lower form; he may move in a far inferior orb, and yet give much light, and communicate a benign and useful influence to the Church of God."]

"And now," he goes on to say, "with great knowledge a great Prudence is also required in the teacher's office, or else his knowledge will be useless and unserviceable." Wisdom is the soul that animates and enlivens knowledge, without which a large knowledge is but like a large carcass, a lifeless, inactive thing. Every learned man is not a wise man. There are some that have a large measure of the spirit of knowledge, but want the spirit of government, which is yet most necessary for him who is to

be the guide of souls. Every teacher is concerned to be wise both for himself and for those committed to his charge; for himself,—not to be betrayed by false brethren, or become a prey to the malice of professed enemies, to keep himself within the bounds of his calling, to be a serpent in caution, in innocence a dove. He is bound to be wise for his flock,—not to obstruct that which ought to be his great design and business, the eternal salvation of their souls. He must speak nothing to offend the weak or give occasion to the malicious. He must be wise in his carriage and actions, wise in his common conversation, not too easy, or of too morose and difficult an access, wise in his choice of friends, wise in the government of his family, wise in administering private counsels and reproofs, observing the circumstances of time and place, of person, of disposition.

But, it may be objected, is not prudence a thing out of our own power—the arbitrary gift of God? Ay! but this excellent gift of God is in a great degree put within our own power, in conjunction with the Divine assistance. We may, and must, endeavour for it, diligently study it, faithfully record experiments, consult wiser friends; but above all things we must take St. James's advice: "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not."*

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* James i. 5.

Thirdly, and lastly, the teacher hath need of Holiness. I may say, as the apostle doth, speaking of the three theological graces—faith, hope, and charity—"There remaineth these three—knowledge, prudence, holiness—but the greatest of these is holiness." The priest that is not "clothed with righteousness," though otherwise adorned with all the ornaments of human and divine literature, and those gilded over with the rays of a seraphic prudence and sagacity, is yet but a naked, beggarly, despicable creature, of no authority, no interest, no use or service in the Church of God."

In conclusion, the preacher turns himself from the clergy to the people. "If, brethren, the pastoral office be so tremendous an undertaking, judge then, I pray you, of the sacrilegious boldness of those Uzzahs among the laity that dare touch this ark—the priests' charge and care! If we, that have been trained up in the schools of the prophets,—that have been educated with no small care and cost, to this employment,—that have spent a double apprenticeship of years in our studies, and most of us a great deal more—if we, I say, after all this, find reason to tremble at our insufficiency, how horrible is the confidence, or rather impudence, of those mechanics that have leaped from the shopboard or the plough into the pulpit, and thus *per saltum*, by a prodigious leap, commenced teachers! what shall we say of these mountebanks in the Church, these

empirics in theology? I only say this, I can never sufficiently admire either their boldness in venturing to be teachers, or the childish folly and simplicity of those who give themselves up to be their disciples."

I have quoted largely from this celebrated sermon, partly because of its intrinsic importance, and partly because it is as good an illustration as any, of Bull's manner, method, and opinions. It must seem not a little remarkable, when we remember the eminently practical character of his teaching and habits of thought, that more than one-third of all his sermons which have been preserved to us are devoted to subjects, possessing indeed a deep human interest, but an interest of a speculative and curious rather than of a practical kind. Such are those on the middle state allotted to mankind presently after death—the low and mean earthly condition of the Blessed Virgin Mary as contrasted with her primitive and proper title of Mother of God—St. Paul's thorn in the flesh, and the cloke which he left at Troas—a noble sermon on the existence and ministration of angels, and the different degrees of glory in Christ's heavenly kingdom. He probably thought, relying on the authority of the Fathers, that these and kindred subjects required a more prominent place, and in the foreground of Christian teaching, rather than the 'middle distance' assigned to them by the Reformation theology. It is evident,

however, that Bull had, in common with many simple, earnest natures, a strong yearning towards the marvellous and unknown. It may be mentioned, in passing, that, like Dr. Samuel Johnson and other well-known instances of men of robust and vigorous but melancholy temperament, he was not wholly free from a tincture of superstition. The phenomena of dreams had a strange attraction for him, believing, as he did, that they were the direct suggestions of good or bad angels. He believed that witches enjoyed a supernatural power of maleficence, due to their being possessed by emissaries of Satan, and that the royal touch was infallibly efficacious in removing the king's evil. All these points come out incidentally in his sermons, and contrast strangely enough with the masculine good sense and freedom from superstition which characterise their direct teaching.

But whatever might be the subject of his discourse, he never failed to improve it to a practical and hortatory conclusion. Nothing indeed could be simpler than the manner in which, we are told, his sermons were composed. After selecting his text, he marked the words in it which were to be explained in order to give the true sense of the Scripture he was upon. "He then wrote down some observations which flowed naturally from the subject, and under each observation hints to illustrate it, texts from Scripture, and citations from the ancients

proper to give light to it, and then drew inferences from the whole discourse by way of application." To this plan of writing his sermons, doubtless a good one in itself, he adheres so rigidly, that it imparts a certain sameness to them all, and must have somewhat detracted from the interest of his preaching for constant hearers. There is, moreover, in most of his discourses which have come down to us, a frequent touch of pedantry and technicality which jars upon the ear, and it is difficult not to think that many of his quotations from Greek, Latin, and Hebrew literature must have been lost upon the congregations which he addressed; for though it is next to impossible to assign date, or place, or circumstance to any of his extant discourses, it does not appear that, in his long career, he ever preached in London or in Oxford, his most enlightened audiences having been found apparently at Bath, Gloucester, and Cirencester. His language is always solid and weighty, but often ponderous, and while totally free from affectation, is destitute of the commendatory grace and charm which come from well-balanced sentences and felicitously chosen expressions. His tone is every now and then a little dogmatic and overbearing; and though he keeps clear of the scurrilous personalities which disgrace many of the polemical writings of the later Stuart period, it must be admitted that his invective is not always dignified, nor restrained within the limits of charity and good taste. We are

told that he was always "clothed with humility"; but it is by no means an obvious inference from his writings, that humility was such an every-day working-dress with him as his biographer would have us suppose. To a sensitive and highly strung nature the studious life is not without its moral dangers; and there is, I think, enough to show that they would have been very real dangers to Bull, had he not availed himself so habitually of the two grand correctives which Dr. Arnold tells us were his own safeguards against these dangers—namely, prayer, and kindly intercourse with the poor.*

Once again, before turning to the more grateful task of calling your attention to the excellences of this great worthy of the English Church, it must be confessed that, though he generally maintains a high level of thought and diction, we search in vain through his extant discourses for such splendid passages of eloquence as light up page after page of his more brilliant contemporaries — soaring flights, in which the speaker seems to be borne onward and upward by an irresistible afflatus of religious fervour which awakens in the hearer's breast an answering glow—rekindling the embers of an expiring faith, throwing new and winning lights on the path of duty, transmuting commonplace into poetry, letter into spirit, familiar, and therefore perhaps inert,

* 'Life,' pp. 183–391.

ideas, into living and transforming thoughts, by the creative power of human but divinely inspired emotion. He comes to us, indeed, with a true message from God to His people; but no seraph has touched his lips with a live coal from the altar. His words are not words of fire, but they are emphatically the "words of truth and soberness." The "mouth speaks out of the abundance of a heart" brimful of goodness and faith and knowledge, incapable of anything selfish or unreal or insincere. If the structure of his discourses is deficient in Ionic grace of form and Corinthian richness of illustration and subtlety of expression, it is solid, harmonious, and durable, with broad and deep foundations imbedded in the living rock of truth.

We take it on the authority of his biographer that he "had a way of gaining people's hearts and touching their consciences which bore some resemblance to the apostolic age. His pathos was simple and unaffected, and his manner, though impressive, was natural and familiar. His notions were so distinct, that he could bring down the sublimest truths to ordinary capacities. He enlivened his discourses with proper and decent gestures, and his voice was always exerted with some vehemency, by which he kept his audience awake, and persuaded the people that he was in earnest." Bull seems, in fact, to have possessed in an eminent degree that quality to which Aristotle attaches so much importance in

the rhetorician — the πίστις διὰ τοῦ ἤθους, or that element of persuasiveness which arises from an impression produced on the hearer's mind of the straightforwardness and sincerity of the speaker. We can judge for ourselves, after the lapse of two hundred years, of the sound sense, good faith, and practical sagacity which characterise his teaching. He never takes a step in advance till his foot is firm; he never puts forward an argument which does not seem to his own mind convincing. There is no reserve, no "economy," in his method; no stepping lightly over dangerous ground; no shrinking from letting us know the length and breadth, the depth and height, of his own beliefs. He postulates close attention on the part of his hearers, but assumes that persons who are capable of seeing the force of objections are also capable of seeing the force of the answers to them. His teaching, even in controversy, is almost always positive; for destructive criticism he has less inclination. He always asserts more than he denies, and is careful, either before or after demolishing an error, to give full expression to what he believes to be the true view of the case.

Such, brethren, seem to me to be the leading characteristics of Bishop Bull's Sermons. It would be beside my purpose, even if time permitted, to attempt to draw out the contrast between his teaching and much of that with which we are familiar at

the present time. Preaching, as a rule, falls into the groove of current opinion, and takes its form and colour from the prevailing religious sentiment and philosophy of the day. And is not this a day of compromise, and avoidance of difficulties, of half-statements and half-denials,—of anxious questionings scarce waiting for, or hoping for, an answer,—of morbid self-analysis and egotistical introspection? It might not be unprofitable for us, if leisure could be won from the demands of the ephemeral (and unephemeral) literature of the day, to commune from time to time with this noble, manly, truthful spirit, —to be transported away from ourselves, and those who, like ourselves, have caught the contagion of feverish scepticism and restless self-consciousness, into a region of calmness, freedom, and simplicity; where we may hold converse with the angels and with the saints of old, where the God who meets with us is the God of revelation, and the heavens above us and the earth beneath are the undoubted work of a Father's hand;—an atmosphere at once sobering and soothing, bracing and reinvigorating, like the breezes blowing over heathery downs that look across the sea.

[A few words more, in conclusion, on Bishop Bull's position in the history of English theology. It is a very remarkable one. He stands at the close of one and the commencement of another epoch of religious thought. Reading the signs of the times,

he may have foreseen, he certainly wrote and taught as if he foresaw, the utter neglect and decay into which the remains of Christian antiquity were about to fall under the influence of the rationalistic method of treating religious doctrine, which may be said to date its commencement from the appearance of Locke's essay on the 'Reasonableness of Christianity' in 1688. Within a short time after the death of Bishop Bull, "dogmatic theology had ceased to exist" in England, and the habit of bringing everything as an open question, to the arbitration of reason, had interpenetrated the whole system of religious philosophy. Christianity was dealt with as if it had on the one hand, no historical annals, no formularies, no doctors, no saints, no confessors; and on the other, no witness of the indwelling Spirit, no intuitive and experimental, as distinguished from external, attestations. Something before the middle of the eighteenth century indeed there broke out a rebellion of English thought against the tyranny of syllogisms and evidences,—that marvellous "rekindling of the religious consciousness of the nation" known as the Methodist and Evangelical movement—a movement which brought out into strong (perhaps disproportionate) prominence the individual and emotional elements of the Christian system, but, equally with the rationalising philosophy, ignored its corporate and historical character and its wealth of tradition. It was not till the present century was well advanced

that, on a memorable day, a group of Oxford graduates took counsel together, and determined to make it the work of their lives to disinter and republish the documentary evidence that the Church of England is an historic Church, with a life, a character, and a sovereign and directive authority of its own,—and not a mere "religious expression" representing more or less accurately the aggregate opinion of its members, or the dominant theological philosophy of the day. How great has been their success, —how dearly that success has been purchased,—is only too well known. But these were their avowed objects, this was their chosen work, and this too was the chosen work of Bull's life, 150 years before. This was the way in which he "contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." But his work is of a nobler and more enduring character than theirs, because he brought to his task, along with a like intensity of conviction, a practical sagacity accepting accomplished facts, a solid discriminating judgment, and a calm sobriety of mind. To no one of her sons is the Church of England more deeply indebted, for the vigour and the learning with which he has vindicated her identity in doctrine and constitution with the church of the ante-Nicene Fathers, and traced up her teaching and discipline higher still, to the teaching and discipline of the "glorious company" who stood round the Lord Jesus on earth;—who learned the pattern

of the New Tabernacle from the lips of its own architect, and drank their fill at the fountain of Divine wisdom and knowledge "while the water of life was still a running stream."]

BISHOP HORSLEY.

Immediate popularity and after-usefulness of sermons—Illustrated by Bishop Horsley's Sermons—Horsley's Life and Works—His Sermons—Their chief characteristics: (1) clearness of reasoning; resemblance in many points to the late Canon Melvill. (2) Submission to Holy Scripture; contrasted with Dr. Clarke. (3) Maintenance of distinctive doctrines of the Church—Value of Horsley's Sermons to theological students—Preaching of the present day.

It is essential to the usefulness of Sermons, that they should both in substance and in style be attuned to the age in which they are delivered.

The subject matter must of course be ever the same. The truths to be enforced change not, they partake of the Immutability of Him who has revealed them. But the clothing of those truths by the preacher, the kind of argument by which he maintains them, will have to be varied from time to time. For it is not sufficient that an argument should be inherently and lastingly sound, it is requisite also that it be adapted to the thought of the generation for which it is intended. It must not only meet their special doubts and questionings, but it must, in meeting them, address their peculiar intellectual mind.

Hence it is that few preachers of long standing find that their earlier sermons can be exactly reproduced in later life, especially if they deal with controverted points. They have to be modified, not because what was then preached is no longer true; but because, being true as ever, it no longer fits the varied phase of human speculation. Hence also the disappointment which many of us have felt when we set ourselves to study the sermons of some famous preacher of the past. We have read in history or biography how he could rivet the attention of his hearers; how his strong hand drew the bow, and the shaft went straight to the mark. Our interest is awakened, we possess ourselves of his works; and lo! the words which were once so burning fall cold and dull upon *our* hearts. It is not the full explanation of this, that a sermon is a speech; and that when it is no longer the speech of a living man to living men, it must necessarily lose its power. The secret of the disappointment lies deeper: it is found in the fact that the preacher, if he was worth anything, addressed the world in which he lived, and his world is no longer ours.

It is almost impossible to conceive how the sermons of Bishop Andrewes were delivered—or listened to. There are passages of surpassing beauty which the universality of the thought and the music of the language commends to all time; but these occur in

the midst of long pages, which no modern preacher could venture to deliver. So with another of our greatest divines, Dr. Barrow. We cannot imagine them patiently heard, and intelligently appreciated by a general audience.

But for sermons of real depth and power there is a second life, greater and more durable than the first. The preacher's voice is hushed; the line of his thought becomes antiquated; the cadence of his sentences no longer sounds musical in the ear. But if his preaching had indeed substance and sinew; if it unfolded with breadth and force solid truth; if it expounded Holy Scripture with lucidity and comprehensiveness; if it searched not only the special vices and follies of a particular age, but the littlenesses and sinfulness of human nature itself, then the sermon which can no longer, if preached from the pulpit, waken the hearts of the people, becomes a mine of dogmatic and practical theology, to be dug into again and again by those who come after. The old thought lives and breathes again in a new vesture. The words, as oratory so fleeting in their power, grow into solid buttresses of the Church of God; so that after-men, as they pass them in review, echo the saying, "Behold, what manner of stones and what building is here!"

I am to speak to you this afternoon of Bishop Horsley as a preacher, and all that I have said finds a complete illustration in him. I have seen it some-

where stated that when he preached in this church (and many of his sermons were delivered here), the whole town flocked to listen. The sermon preached before the House of Lords after the murder of the French king, was remembered for years. And yet if this lecture should, as I trust it may, induce any of you to possess yourselves of Horsley's works, you will probably marvel what it was which so carried his auditors along with him. On the other hand, I do not know any more valuable volumes to place in the hands of a theological student. "Every discourse"—I am quoting the language of an article in the 'Edinburgh Review,' published soon after his death—"may justly be denominated a Gospel Sermon. They almost all contain a critical disquisition on some text of Scripture, which is either difficult in itself, or which has been misunderstood, the elucidation and assertion of some important doctrine, and a plain and sometimes an animated detail of practical consequences." It is obvious that sermons, of which such are the characteristics, are especially qualified for that second life which I have said is reserved for some. I shall endeavour presently to give you an opportunity of judging how far the sermons of Horsley are here justly described.

Bishop Horsley belongs to the latter half of the last century. He was born in 1733 and died in 1806. His earlier publications were mathematical. His first publication of this kind is entitled: "The

Power of God deduced from the computible instantaneous productions of it in the solar system." The theological purpose of this treatise is, I suppose, sounder than its science. Horsley, instead of regarding the planets as performing their evolutions by virtue of an original law impressed once for all upon them by the Creator, argued that a fresh impulse was momentarily required and given, and thence deduced the doctrine of a living God operating continually for the preservation of the universe.

Some twenty years afterwards appeared his edition of the works of Sir Isaac Newton; but in the meantime, whilst engaged in editing Newton, he was drawn into the controversy of pure theology, which first made his name famous.

In 1782 commenced Dr. Priestley's attack upon the creeds of the Church. The title of the book was 'A History of the Corruptions of Christianity.' The alleged corruptions of Christianity had no reference to the superstitions of the Middle Ages, but touched upon the very citadel of our religion. The Catholic doctrine of our blessed Lord's Divinity was stated to be a corruption of the original deposit of the faith. Nay, the Arian doctrine, that Jesus, although not God over all blessed for ever, had nevertheless an existence previous to His birth of the Virgin, was itself affirmed to be a corruption of the faith. Horsley was then Archdeacon of St. Albans, and in that capacity had to deliver a charge.

It is an index of the inactivity of the Church at that period that the charges of bishops and archdeacons, instead of being directed to points of diocesan administration and parochial work, were frequently devoted to the discussion of some abstract point of theology, or even of national policy. Horsley made his charge to the clergy of St. Albans the instrument of answering the Unitarian attack. The controversy extended over six years. Horsley was profoundly read in the Fathers of the Church, and he availed himself of his patristic learning to demonstrate Dr. Priestley's ignorance of the early Christian writers, from whose testimony it could alone be determined whether the creeds which we recite are a vitiation of the belief of the first disciples, or are indeed that which has been held from the beginning.

The field of this controversy is almost identical with that made famous by Bishop Bull a century before—and it is a remarkable instance of the unpreparedness with which Priestley began his attack upon the orthodox faith, that we have it under his own hand that he had never read Bull's Defence of the Nicene Creed, then as now a standard work of theology.

In the year 1788, towards the close of this controversy, Horsley became Bishop of St. Davids, subsequently Bishop of Rochester, and finally Bishop of St. Asaph.

I do not enter upon the merits of Bishop Horsley's writings in this controversy further than to say that even by those who looked at the dispute not as a contest for the very essence of Christianity but as a mere battle of learning, Horsley was held to have been entirely victorious—to have established, *i.e.*, by the witness of the first centuries themselves, that their faith was ours, their hope ours—in all that concerns the true and proper Deity of the Eternal Son of God.

But now more particularly as to the sermons of Horsley—sermons which were in their day a religious force, and which have now entered upon that second life which I cannot but think they are destined to retain as an integral part of English theology. Let me proceed to give you an account of them.

The sermons which have come down to us are, some of an evidential character—some expository. From others, preached on national fast days and festivals, we gather the preacher's views of government, and of the relation of public events to the Divine rule.

The first characteristic to be noted in all these sermons is the extreme clearness with which the topic proposed for discussion is set forth and the argument marshalled. In this respect I am most reminded of him by the late Canon Melvill amongst preachers of our own time. In both these writers

the different stages of the reasoning are marked with an almost mathematical precision. The hearer knows exactly at what point he has arrived at any given moment in the elucidation of the subject. Different trains of thought are never commingled, but each is pursued to its full development, to be succeeded by the opening out of another and independent course of argument, having all the freshness of a new sermon—whilst the unity of the whole is preserved by the manner in which the various paths along which the listener is borne are felt to be converging to one and the same point —the maintenance or refutation of the original position.

The two preachers whom I have been comparing are alike in another characteristic. They each determinately seize upon the point of difficulty in any text or narrative, and address their whole force to its solution—setting forth in the broadest way what the difficulty is, as though with an intellectual pleasure in the very hardness of the problem which they set themselves to solve.

Bishop Horsley thus describes his own view of this matter:

"It is the glory of our Church," he says,* "that the most illiterate of her sons are in possession of the Scriptures in their mother tongue. It is their

* Sermon I., "On Christ's Second Advent."

duty to make the most of so great a blessing, by employing as much time as they can spare from the necessary business of their several callings in the diligent study of the written Word. It is the duty of their teachers to give them all possible assistance and encouragement in this necessary work. I apprehend that we mistake our proper duty when we avoid the public discussion of difficult or ambiguous texts; and either keep them entirely out of sight, or when that cannot easily be done, obtrude our interpretations upon the laity, as magisterial or oracular, without proof or argument. . . . It is God's will that all men should be brought to a just understanding of the deliverance Christ hath wrought for us,—to a just apprehension of the magnitude of our hopes in Him, and of the certainty of the evidence on which these hopes are founded. It is God's will that all men should come to a knowledge of the original dignity of our Saviour's Person—of the mystery of His Incarnation—of the nature of His eternal Priesthood—the value of His Atonement, the efficacy of His Intercession. These things are never to be understood without much more than a superficial knowledge of the Scriptures, especially the Scriptures of the New Testament—and yet that knowledge of the Scriptures which is necessary to the understanding of these things is what few, I would hope, in this country are too illiterate to attain. It is *our* duty to facilitate the attainment

by clearing difficulties. It may be proper to *state* those we cannot clear; to present our hearers with the interpretations that have been attempted, and to show where they fail:—in a word, to *make them masters of the question*, though neither they nor we may be competent to the resolution of it."

It may admit of doubt whether in our day, and still more in his own, the proportion of hearers qualified to enter into his argument may not have been overrated by Bishop Horsley. But the above passage is the key to his whole preaching—the selection of his subject and his mode of treating it. Thus we have a series of sermons on the nature of the evidence of our Lord's Resurrection. The text chosen is that passage of St. Peter's address to Cornelius, in which the Apostle declares how God, having raised up Jesus, showed Him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God." Bishop Horsley at once places his finger upon the seemingly weak point in this statement—"The selection of witnesses carries, it may be said, no very fair appearance. The *choice* of witnesses brings a suspicion on their whole testimony." And then, having set forth in plainest terms the difficulty, he boldly confronts it. "I mean to show that this is the necessary consequence of certain circumstances which indispensably require that the evidence should be just what it is—insomuch that the proof would be rather weakened than improved by any

attempt to complete it in the part in which it is supposed to be deficient."

Again, we have four most important sermons upon "Prophecy," based upon the following definition, almost epigrammatic in its pregnant brevity, which, it will be at once seen, checks all vain speculations upon predictions yet unfulfilled, and, nevertheless, finds for the prophetic gift ample scope in the spiritual training of the world. "Prophecy* was not given to enable curious men to pry into futurity, but to enable the serious and considerate to discern in past events the Hand of Providence." And he proceeds to unfold his view of prophecy as one grand system, having a single definite aim and subject-matter, to be understood not by dwelling upon any one prediction, but by referring all particular predictions to the system, and comparing prophecies with events.

A ready instance of what I have adverted to as a characteristic of Bishop Horsley and of the late Canon Melvill—viz., the seizing at once upon the point of difficulty—occurs in a sermon of the former on the text, "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He *must* go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." The preacher glances only

* Sermon I., on 2 Peter i. 20, 21.

obliquely upon the more obvious truths here noted, the Passion, the Death, the Resurrection, and throws himself upon a single word—"must." "The form of expression here," he says, "is very remarkable in the original: and it is well preserved in our English translation. He *must* go—He *must* suffer—He *must* be killed—He *must* be raised again on the third day. All these things were fixed and determined—must inevitably be—nothing could prevent them; and yet the greater part of them were of a kind that might *seem* to depend entirely upon man's free agency." That single word "must" forms the subject of the sermon, as it forms the difficulty of the text: "The previous certainty of things to come is one of those truths which are not easily comprehended." To this, therefore, Bishop Horsley addresses himself.

2. A second characteristic of Bishop Horsley's preaching is his simple and childlike acceptance of Holy Scripture. To unfold its true sense is his object. For this he brings to bear with unwearied patience the stores of his learning, and his argumentative acumen. Having attained to the sense of Scripture, he has no more to do. He bows at once his intellect to its supremacy, accepting its dictum as all-sufficient. We have in him, therefore, an *ex* necessary co:ho was not only a theologian, but a which indispensadent of the exact sciences, giving should be just wl the interpretation of Scripture, would be rather as to its claim to teach and to guide.

In this respect a contrast has been drawn between him and another eminent preacher of the same date. "Dr. Clarke," it has been said,* "in his sermons often treats and largely discusses Christian subjects, the mysteries of Redemption and the various positive ordinances of the Gospel. But he does so with this remarkable difference from Bishop Horsley, that *he* is never satisfied with any Scripture principle or precept till he has laboured to render it conformable to what he calls eternal reason, and the fitness of things. Bishop Horsley, when he has distinctly traced a principle, doctrine, or precept to Scripture, justly thinks that he has done all that a Christian can require to enforce obedience."

This characteristic of Bishop Horsley's mind is exemplified in perhaps the most remarkable sermon which he has left us, and in the words with which the sermon concludes. He has been preaching upon that passage in the first epistle of St. Peter which speaks of our blessed Lord as having gone, after His crucifixion, and preached unto the spirits in prison which sometime were disobedient when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." Having alluded to certain difficulties connected with the subject, he ends thus: "However that may be, thither, the Apostle says, He went and preached. Is any difficulty that may present itself to the human

* 'Edinburgh Review,' 1811.

mind, upon the circumstances of that preaching, of sufficient weight to make the thing unfit to be believed upon the word of the Apostle? Or are we justified, if, for such difficulties, we abandon the plain sense of the Apostle's words and impose upon them another meaning not easily adapted to the words, though more proportioned to the capacity of our understanding, especially when it is confirmed by other Scriptures that He went to that place? If the clear assertions of Holy Writ are to be discredited on account of difficulties which may seem to the human mind to arise out of them, little will remain to be believed in revealed, or even in what is called natural religion. We must immediately part with the doctrines of atonement, of gratuitous redemption, of justification by faith without the works of the law, of sanctification by the influence of the Holy Spirit; and we must part at once with the hope of the Resurrection. . . . How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? are questions more easily asked than answered, unless it may be an answer to refer the proposer of them to the promises of Holy Writ and the power of God to make good those promises." *

The whole of this famous sermon is founded on these principles. It is a sermon which has a special interest for us, as it bears upon those questions of

* Sermon on 1 Peter iii. 18-20.

eschatology which are at this moment prominent. Bishop Horsley's subject does not indeed lead him to any direct investigation of those passages of Scripture which relate to Eternal Punishment. He has nothing therefore to say upon the question of the ultimate salvation of all, or of the restriction of the Gift of Immortality to those who die in a state of acceptance. But following with unhesitating step the literal sense of Scripture, he sets forth with singular boldness (for his age) the doctrine of an intermediate state, of a place in which the souls of the righteous and unrighteous exist in a state of active consciousness, capable of receiving instruction from Christ, who, it is the object of the sermon to prove, did, according to St. Peter, preach unto them during the interval between His own death upon the Cross and His Resurrection. Bishop Horsley limits, indeed, this mysterious preaching to the souls of the *righteous*, and its subject-matter to the proclamation of the completion of Christ's redeeming sacrifice and His coming appearance before the Father as their Intercessor. In doing this he may be thought somewhat to force the text on which he relies by interpreting the "spirits in prison which sometime were disobedient when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah," of those who perished in the general deluge, yet *not* in hardened impenitence and unbelief. But the whole sermon is very valuable for its reverent investigation

of the teaching of Scripture with regard to the condition of disembodied souls—for what it *suggests*, as well as for what it *declares*, as to that intermediate state of being; which held a far more important place in the theology of earlier times than of more recent days, and in the mystery of which lies hidden, I must myself think, the solution of countless difficulties, to us at present wholly inexplicable, in regard to the final judgment and the eternal destinies of men.

3. There remains another question in reference to Horsley as a preacher. How far did he hold and enforce the distinctive doctrines of the Church of England? And it must be confessed that his sermons as a whole deal rather with subjects common to all denominations of Christians than with the special doctrines enshrined in the formularies of the Church. The age in which he lived, the latter half of the eighteenth century, was that in which the estimate of the spiritual character of the English Church touched the lowest point, when the idea of the Establishment had almost wholly superseded the idea of the Church. But it would be unjust to assume therefore that Horsley held laxly what we in better times have learnt more highly to appreciate. It may be enough to quote the following passage to show that Horsley claims a place in the catena of divines who have clung, even in the worst days, to the fundamental principles of the Church

Catholic. Preaching on the famous charge of our blessed Lord to St. Peter,* he says: "The keys of the kingdom of heaven here promised to St. Peter, by the principles we have laid down for the exposition of this text, must be something quite distinct from that with which it hath generally been confounded —the power of the remission and retention of sins conferred by our Lord, after His Resurrection, upon the Apostles in general, and transmitted through them to the perpetual succession of the priesthood. This is the discretionary power lodged in the priesthood of dispensing the sacraments, and of granting to the penitent and refusing to the obdurate the benefit and comfort of absolution. The object of this power is the individual upon whom it is exercised, according to the particular circumstances of each man's case. It was exercised by the Apostles in many striking instances; it is exercised now by every priest, when he administers or withholds the Sacrament of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, or upon just grounds pronounces or refuses to pronounce upon an individual the sentence of absolution."

So then we would relegate the sermons of Bishop Horsley, not to the undisturbed repose of quiet libraries, but to that second life of which we have spoken, which belongs to such preaching as, when it

* Sermon on St. Matthew xvi. 18, 19.

has ceased to speak to the ear of a congregation, is qualified to perform even a nobler task, of informing the minds of those who have to fill the preacher's office to an after-day. It appears to me that in this metropolis, and in our great towns, we want more than we have of such preaching as that of Horsley—in which solid learning, and logical precision, and clearness of thought, and simplicity of belief, shall be brought to bear upon the interpretation of Holy Scripture. There have been times, doubtless, when the sermon partook rather of the character of an essay or review, instead of being a warm appeal from a living man to the hearts of his brethren. We have left behind us the cold, dry, essay-sermon. And it is well—well to have substituted for it winged words which, by God's grace, may awaken slumbering souls, and lift up those who have ears to hear, above the positivism of a materialistic age to a truer appreciation of their position, as in the midst of the kingdom of God, tasting even now the powers of the world to come. But there are multitudes of thinking men amongst us who have doubts to be relieved, difficulties to be removed, questions to be answered, who require to be strengthened and built up week by week against the sceptical indifference and pretentious criticism which meets them at every turn. To such as these, sermons like those of Horsley, cast into the mould of the thought of the present day, would supply in

no small measure what they need—a preaching which does not ignore difficulties, but meets them face to face, which sets itself to explore, with all the aids of human learning and laborious preparation, with all the fearlessness of a reverent belief, the mysteries of the kingdom of God.

JEREMY TAYLOR,

THE ENGLISH CHRYSOSTOM.

"An eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures. . . .

"Being fervent in spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord . . .

"And he helped them much who had believed through grace."

Acts xviii. 24, 25, 27.

Introduction—Object proposed in this Lecture, not to estimate Taylor's genius, but simply to study his especial subjects and method.

I.—Taylor beyond all else a preacher—Brief sketch of the events of his life and of his position in the development of English theology, in illustration of his preaching.

II.—Comparison with Chrysostom in—

(*a*) Special preaching of holiness; and hence strong sense of the Divine Image in man, tendency to ascetic views of life, and love of freedom in the growth of the individual soul.

(*b*) Preservation of broad simplicity of idea, underlying much fulness and imaginative variety of detail.

(*c*) Characteristics of style and oratorical method—Exemplified in isolated passages and in the group of Advent Sermons.

III.—Conclusion—Taylor's distinguishing qualities—Eloquence—Learning—Fervency of spirit—Devotion to teaching—Edifying in holiness, rather than converting to faith.

THE chair of teaching in the house of God is no place for mere human history, still less for mere human praise. If the history even of great men is to be

touched upon here, it ought to be studied mainly in relation to the working out of God's gracious dispensation to His Church; if ever their high gifts and graces are spoken of, they must be regarded simply as imperfect manifestations of the manifold power and wisdom of God who gave them all; so that the light shining in them may "glorify," not them, but "their Father which is in heaven."

Hence I conceive that the treatment in this place of the 'Classic Preachers of the English Church' is designed mainly, if not solely, to bring out in great living examples various aspects of Gospel truth, and various methods of proclaiming it—in trust that perhaps something may be learnt, both by those who occupy the place of hearers, and by those who are called upon to hold the more responsible post of teaching, which may enable us better to hear, and better to speak, the one eternal truth which is the life of men.

Only under this idea should I have ventured to undertake to speak of one who has been called by Coleridge "the most eloquent of divines," if not "the most eloquent of men." I have neither the time nor the power to attempt any description of his extraordinary scope and variety of learning; his marvellous oratorical force and copiousness, his felicity of illustration and language; his richness of imagination, often tinged with the divine light of true poetry, occasionally, though rarely, lighted up

with flashes of humour; and last, not least, the strong and coherent thought which underlies all this many-coloured and vivid beauty. To describe these adequately would need the eloquence of a second Jeremy Taylor. I can still less venture on the dangerous task of criticism of Taylor's genius in itself—a task to which the large and subtle mind of Coleridge was not more than equal. Nor, indeed, had I the power, either of teaching you to sit in judgment on our great preacher, or of holding him up for your admiration in the most fervid eloquence of eulogy, or, by well-selected quotation and citation, of keeping you for the time entranced under spell of the great orator himself, so far as "being dead he still speaketh"—should I hold that in so doing I was fulfilling the task, which ought most to be attempted in the Lord's house upon the Lord's day. My desire, in accordance with the principle at which I have already glanced, is simply to inquire what are the peculiar aspects of the Christian message which are most characteristic of the great preacher, and what are the especial methods by which he brings them home—as all true preachers seek to bring them home—at once to the mind and the conscience, to the imagination and the heart of his hearers.

I. I am to speak of Taylor as a preacher; and, indeed, he seems to me almost always a preacher, even in his written works. Like the Apollos described in

the words of the text, he is "eloquent and mighty in learning," "fervent in spirit and diligent in teaching the things of the Lord." But perhaps before all else he is eloquent—capable, that is, of speaking out the thought that is in him, in all force and brightness as a living thing.

Now this capacity implies, I think, first, a complete and absolute grasp of the thought itself, with the whole force of our own nature, intellectual, moral, and spiritual; next, a power of sympathy with other men, entering into their minds and hearts, not in order to remain with them on their level, but to raise them to a higher level, to which, as we trust, God has raised us; then, over and above this, a power of language, able to find rapidly and intuitively the right word, at once definite and vivid, to express our meaning: and, lastly, at least for the highest eloquence, some light of imagination to bring out the hidden resemblances, and some flash of humour to disclose the incongruities, of things. He who has these gifts—rare gifts indeed—is eloquent. No doubt he must have the thought first, in order to speak it out; and perhaps some power, even some greatness, of thought is indispensable. But the two gifts of thought and eloquence are far from commensurate. What is a sadder sight than to see this marvellous gift of eloquence employed to make weak and shallow ideas pass for wisdom; to give unnatural life to falsehood or prejudice; to kindle by

wicked thought the conflagration which may destroy a whole society? Eloquence itself is a distinct and special gift; and eloquent above all things Jeremy Taylor is. Not only in his sermons—such as have remained to us—few only (as we must conceive) of the many which flowed from his lips—but in his 'Life of Christ,' in his 'Holy Living and Dying,' in his enthusiastic plea for 'Liberty of Prophesying,' even in many of his controversial and distinctly theological works, we seem not to be reading what has been written in the quietness of the study, but rather to be listening to what is poured out from the glowing lips of the orator. The very style of the sentence, in the full stateliness of its construction and the elaborate multiplicity of its parts, seems constantly to call for the modulated and varied tones of the human voice; in order to rescue it from cumbrousness or intricacy, and to bring it out in that perfect harmony of richness and simplicity, which is one secret of the highest eloquence. But although this is so, and although, indeed, the remembrance of it seems to me the key to many of the excellences, and some of the defects, of Jeremy Taylor, as a writer, still, in order to narrow the subject within manageable dimensions, I propose to refer in this lecture primarily to the Sermons, and, speaking generally, to the Sermons alone.

I am to speak of him (I say) as a preacher, not as an actor in the drama of life at a very stirring

period, or as a chief theologian in an important phase of English Theology. But a man's life is one. What he is in acting and thinking for himself, that he must be in speaking to others. To estimate Taylor rightly, even as a preacher, a brief glance (and it need only be brief) must first be cast at the events of his life, and at the position which he occupies in thought among our chief divines. This will be more than enough to bring out to us the characteristics of our great preacher.

Born twelve years before the accession of Charles I. (1613), dying just seven years after the Restoration of Charles II. (1667), his life corresponded almost exactly with that great revolution, political and ecclesiastical, which, more perhaps than any other, determined, as by its rise and progress, so also by its close, the future of England in Church and State. His life lies plainly and simply before us* in its main outlines. We see him first rising from a humble origin in Cambridge, and beginning his education there; next, under the patronage of Laud—that patronage which always seems to me to belie by its sagacity and generosity much of the ordinary estimate of his character†—transferred to the head-

* See Heber's 'Life of Jeremy Taylor,' prefixed to his edition of Taylor's 'Works,' published in 1828.

† It should be noted that it extended even to men like Hales and Chillingworth. It was only with the Puritans that he fought his battle with an intensity and a narrowness of intolerance, which was at least equalled on the other side.

quarters of loyalty in Oxford, and distinguished by royal favour; then in the great convulsion which rent English society asunder, following, for a time, the fortunes and sharing the disasters of the royal cause; but in the main (as he himself says) finding in the "great storm which dashed the vessel of the Church all in pieces a quiet haven for his little bark" in the retirement first of 'the Golden Grove,' and afterwards of Portmore;" and at last, when the storm had past, living to see the restoration of that which he so ardently loved, and yet strangely—perhaps because of his too generous and liberal spirit—placed even then in no place worthy of his greatness, or congenial to his desires. In all these varying fortunes of his life we seem to trace a manifold training of his genius under the Providence of God. There was for him an almost perfect union of large opportunity for study with practical knowledge of the world and of human nature, and of that participation in the great questions of a great time, which is itself an education, with the enforced retirement to the quietness of home and the beauty of Nature, which is needful for bringing to perfection the fruit of the seed sown in troublous times. What more could have been given under God's Providence to train the great preacher, in that sympathy with the outer world, and in that thoughtful fixity of the inner life, both of which are needful for him who would sway the souls of men?

Nor was the impress of the time less clearly and deeply marked on his whole line of thought.

He was trained mainly in the great High Church school of Andrewes and Laud; and he drew thence a deep attachment to the two great principles which gave it all its strength and nobleness—a strong belief in the continuity of Christian truth, amidst all vicissitudes of action and thought, and in spite of all corruption and deadness of spiritual life, from the first ages of the Church—and, side by side with this, a similar conviction of the unbroken continuity of Christ's presence, and therefore of spiritual life in the Church itself, giving it a certain sacredness of authority, and marking out the reality of its corporate blessings. On these two great principles he laid a firm grasp, which was never relaxed; and in that same school also he learnt to appreciate width of learning and variety of rich human culture, with an appreciation which would have seemed dangerous, almost unfaithful, to the narrow intensity of Puritan zeal. But he had lived to see, first, the utter collapse of the attempt made by Laud to enforce dogmatic orthodoxy, regularity of Church order, splendour of Church ceremonial, by the strong hand of ecclesiastical and temporal law; and, next, the still more utter failure of the Puritan school—more rigid still in their zeal for doctrinal exactness, and (with a few noble exceptions) far more narrow in their imposition of terms of Communion, whether for

the uniformity at which the Presbyterians aimed, or for the cohesion of the smaller sects into which the Independents were content to split up—to lay hold of the spiritual life of the whole English people, especially in its freer and more intellectual developments. Like most great men, he learnt much and unlearnt little. He came by degrees not to give up his old principles, but to add to them their needful complement. There grew up in him an earnest zeal for spiritual liberty, unknown to his precursors and teachers—a conviction that, if the Church is to have a living unity in place of a dead uniformity, there must be a large scope for liberty, both before the law and before the bar of conscience—a desire accordingly to make the Church comprehensive, by exacting the simplest possible terms of Communion, and trusting to the intrinsic power of true theology to defend and to assert itself, without the compulsion of law and the terror of anathema. The union of these new and old principles is an union rare in all times; it was especially rare, almost unexampled, in his. This "Liberal High Churchmanship," if I may apply to it a modern phrase, is the special characteristic which gives to Jeremy Taylor a strongly marked individuality in the ranks of English theologians. His theology, no doubt, was that of the orator rather than the doctor; it had its loosenesses, its inconsistencies, its rashnesses of inference, its confusion of illustration with proof, of strong argu-

ments with weak ones. But its general character is strong and unmistakable. It comes out again and again in various forms in all the many works which issued from his prolific pen; it lends itself with singular appropriateness to the peculiar phases of his oratorical genius.

II. Such was he as an actor and a thinker. But what was he especially as a preacher? He has been often called "the English Chrysostom." I am inclined to press the comparison implied in this phrase beyond that mere attribution to both of the Divine gift of a golden eloquence, which perhaps it is usually satisfied to convey. There was much contrast between the stormy and pathetic history of the great Patriarch of Constantinople, and the comparatively uneventful course of our great bishop. There were many points of difference, even in the characteristics of their common eloquence. But there were, as it seems to me, still more features of singular resemblance between them, both as thinkers and as orators, in the very points which gave to both their most marked individuality of character. Some of these points I will now endeavour to examine in relation to the substance, to the style, and to the method of our great preacher.

(*a*) First, then, I would urge that, like his prototype, our English Chrysostom was in a very emphatic sense "a Preacher of Holiness." "Holy Living and Holy Dying" is the very motto of his whole

teaching. Now, in holiness is implied first of all purity—the purity, which is in man the perfection of the power to love, and by love to assimilate, all that is true and beautiful, loving and pure. But holiness is a religious purity. It involves the conviction that this purity is the sign of a Divine image dwelling in man, sustained by communion with God, and implying a consecration of the human life to God, both here and hereafter. It can, indeed, be hardly necessary to point out that, in all thought which recognises an eternal and all-guiding God, the preaching of holiness must imply faith; for it must hold that from His love is the first gift of all that is good in us, and in His grace the continual sustenance of that good which He first gives. Nor is it less clear, that, wherever the active life is acknowledged as co-ordinate with the contemplative, there must be enforcement also of the great relative duties of righteousness and love, as well as of the absolute beauty of holiness in the spiritual life of the soul within. But yet these great co-ordinate principles are recognised, in different degrees of prominence and in different proportions of sacredness, at different times and in different schools of thought. There are those who are especially preachers of faith, content to dwell on this as the one thing needful, from which all else will follow as a thing of course. There are those who are preachers of righteous and self-sacrificing energy,

holding that in the will to do God's will lies the only key of Divine knowledge. There are those also who are (as I have said) especially preachers of holiness—that is of the higher life, to which faith gives the entrance, and which lies calm and silent under the surging activities of this busy world.

Such, as it seems to me, were both the ancient and the modern Chrysostoms; and from this leading characteristic there follow others in which they are also at one.

The noblest characteristic of all such teaching is surely the strong and pervading sense of a Divine Image in man, capable of growing by free adhesion to the Will of God, capable of a constant communion with the Divine Spirit, capable of being, in the full breadth and depth of the term, a "fellow-worker" with God, for its own salvation, and for the salvation of the world. Not even the deep conviction that the nature of man, as unfallen, must lean absolutely on God's grace, and find His strength made perfect in weakness; nor even the still deeper sense of the wretchedness brought on man's nature by the Fall, in which he is "far gone from original righteousness," and of the absolute need of reliance for salvation on the cleansing Blood of Christ alone —not even these truths, lying at the very basis of Christianity, are allowed so to absorb the mind and heart, as to drive out the inner consciousness of "the

Divine in man," never destroyed, and now restored in Jesus Christ.

But where this is, there is always some tendency to emphasise man's part in that fellow-working to an extent which may seem, and which may at times be (as both Chrysostom and Taylor were accused of being), half-Pelagian in its encroachments on the absolute sovereignty of God's grace. Nor less surely with the noble assertion of an original righteousness, impaired but never lost, anterior to original sin in the beginning, and destined to conquer it in the end, there is apt to associate itself (what in Taylor's teaching was again at times traceable) a disposition to extenuate the terrible reality of inborn sin, and the inevitable retribution which must wait upon it before the pure eyes of God.*

These dangers unquestionably seem to attach to the especial and prominent preaching of Holiness. Need I say to you that they are excrescences, not natural outgrowths? Need I urge that they should not be allowed to obscure in our judgment the nobleness, the beauty, the exalting power of that teaching?

* I allude especially to Taylor's 'Unum Necessarium' and his 'Letter on Original Sin.' In both it is impossible not to trace the consequences of a reaction against the extreme Calvinistic views, which would have substituted in our Article "wholly deprived of original righteousness" for "very far gone from original righteousness," and so dwelt on the irresistible and indefectible power of grace as to make the human soul a mere instrument in the Almighty Hand.

Not unconnected, as I think, with that same leading principle is the prevalence of an austere and sometimes an ascetic view of life. How strong was this principle in the great Patriarch of Constantinople—how it was alternately the source of power and the secret of failure in his magnificent struggle against the luxury and corruption of his time—every student of Church history knows well.* In Jeremy Taylor, indeed, that spirit was largely tempered by his closer association with the ties and affections of our human nature, and especially with that domestic love, both of husband and of father, which he has so beautifully described in his Sermon on "the Marriage Ring."† But still

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* See the excellent 'Life of Chrysostom,' by the Rev. Prebendary Stephens. (Murray 1872.)

† See, for example, his noble description of the beauty of wedded life. "The state of marriage fills up the number of the elect, and hath in it the labour of love, and the delicacies of friendship, the blessing of society, and the union of hands and hearts; it hath in it less of beauty, but more of safety, than the single life; it hath more care, but less danger; it is more merry, and more sad; it is fuller of sorrows, and fuller of joys; it lies under more burdens, but it is supported by all the strengths of love and charity, and those burdens are delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities, and churches, and heaven itself. Celibacy, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in a perpetual sweetness, but sits alone, and is confined and dies in singularity; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and obeys their king, and keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is a state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world. . . . .

it is not indistinctly seen. So lofty was his conception of the holiness of a nature born and redeemed to the Image of God—so infinitely deep his sense of the responsibility following that Divine privilege, as the shadow waits upon the light—so strong the revulsion of feeling, when he turned to the world as he saw it, especially in the unnatural condition of civil war, or, worse still, in the profligacy and luxury, which were held to be a protest against narrowness or hypocrisy—that almost inevitably there rose again and again to his lips the cry of the prophet, "Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" or the yet more awful question of the apostolic writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Of how sore punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and done despite to the Spirit of Grace?" It was no wonder that, at times almost to excess, he dwelt on "the terror of the Lord," in order "to persuade men," and, in the foresight of the judgment to come, almost doubted whether a man should ever be

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Single life makes men in one instance to be like angels, but marriage in very many things makes the chaste pair to be like to Christ." Still more tender, if less rich in beauty, is his reference to the love of children—"No man can tell but he that loves his children how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society."

lighthearted and merry.* No wonder that, impatient of a vain trust in an undistinguishing mercy of God, he urged the infinite difficulty and hardness and lengthsomeness of repentance, and the rashness of trusting to those snatches of penitence for which a deathbed might find room.† No wonder that at times he seemed half to incline to flee from the world, or, if that might not be, to look upon the life in this world as so full of stains, that it must be brought to be cleansed daily with tears in the sanctuary of private devotion. True, that to some extent the very richness of his own character, sensitive to all the beauty of nature and humanity, and learning through them to glorify the infinite mercies of God, "in giving" (as he puts it) "and in forgiving," escaped from the limits of this austere gravity and solemnity. But few who have read thoughtfully his Sermons, or even delighted

* See the close of third Advent Sermon. "I will not be so severe in this meditation as to forbid any man to laugh, that believes himself shall be called to so severe a judgement; yet St. Hierome said it, 'Coram eodo et terra rationem reddemus totius nostræ vitæ; et tu rides? Heaven and earth shall see all the follies and baseness of thy life, and dost thou laugh?' That we may, but we have not reason to laugh loudly and frequently if we consider things wisely, and as we are concerned: but if we do, yet 'præsentis temporis ita est agenda lætitia, ut sequentis judicii amaritudo numquam recedat a memoria.' So laugh here that you may not forget your danger, lest you weep for ever."

† See his Sermon on "The Invalidity of a late or Deathbed Repentence." So he says elsewhere in his Sermon on "Growth in Grace," "The work of heaven is not done by a flash of lightning or a dash of affectionate rain or a few tears of a relenting pity."

in the infinite beauty of his 'Holy Living and Dying,' will be insensible to this pervading sense, half stern and half pathetic, of the awfulness of life, and this burning indignation, half pitying and half denunciatory, of those who take God's mercy as a thing of course, and deem lightly of the blackness of sin, because they know that it can be washed away in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Nor, as it seems to me, can we fail to connect with this same sense of the sacredness of the individual soul, as redeemed to God, and of the irresistible gravitation drawing it to Him in the Lord Jesus Christ, another characteristic already noticed as one of the noblest and most striking peculiarities of Taylor's teaching. I mean his earnest zeal for individual freedom—his reluctance to coerce it either by law or by anathema, his desire to make simple and comprehensive the terms of Church Communion, his profound belief that Christ can be found, and will be found to salvation, by every soul which earnestly seeks him.

In some degree such breadth and generosity of conception marks the earlier Chrysostom. But here our own later Chrysostom goes infinitely beyond him, and infinitely beyond any one of our own English theologians who had any deep sense of the infinite importance of truth as truth, and any true reverence for the Church as the Body of Christ. I must not here be tempted to dwell on the immortal 'Liberty

of Prophesying,' on the noble wisdom, and even the noble rashnesses, of that magnificent plea for all but unrestrained liberty—as before the bar of human law, so in some degree in the sight and under the law of God Himself. That great work stands out unsurpassed and unequalled in its direct enforcement of the principles of which I now speak. Yet the same spirit—not, of course, in direct and formal expression, but by unmistakable implication in practical forms—appears to pervade most of Taylor's Sermons. For intensely strong in them is the sense of personal religion, as it grows up without the intervention even of the Church or her ministry between the soul and God,—the belief that every soul, if only it will, must be drawn to God—the conviction of the simplicity of the gospel of salvation, especially as contrasted with the burdensomeness and intricacy of some of its counterfeits—the mingling of a natural delight in the discussion of points of metaphysics or abstract theology, with a constant turning back from these to the broad plainness and solemnity of the things which concern our peace. High Churchman as Taylor was, vast as was his reading, strong as was his theological and metaphysical energy of thought, it would be hard to tell from most of these Sermons to what party or school he belonged. He is a Christian speaking to Christians. It is his delight to be this, neither less nor more.

(*b*) But from this consideration of the main topics of

preaching and the leading characteristics of Christian life set forth, I pass to glance briefly at a characteristic of the mode of thought of both our great preachers, which may perhaps at first sight seem strange to those who look mainly at their great richness and variety of idea and style. I mean the broad, strong common-sense, in the appeal both to the understanding and to the heart and conscience of mankind at large, which underlies all this acknowledged richness and variety. Very notable is this characteristic in the ancient Chrysostom, especially in those priceless homiletic commentaries on Holy Scripture to which his modern counterpart, so far as I know, has nothing even approaching comparison, and which offer to the student of our own day so refreshing a contrast to the mystic subtleties of even the greatest ancient theologians. But you will, I think, find this same characteristic in Jeremy Taylor, if, through the rich and many-coloured vesture of his style, you will look at the great outlines of substance. Seldom will you find any great subtlety of thought, seldom any paradoxical originality of treatment, seldom the advancement of ideas belonging to the speaker's own idiosyncrasies, or capable of being understood only by the initiated. However full, copious, elaborate the sermon, the main conceptions are simple; questionable or erroneous they may be, but never intricate or obscure; conceits and quaintnesses of detail there are in

abundance, but the great ideas are such as he who runs may read.

For, indeed, this must be the method of a great orator, addressing (as every preacher addresses) an assembly of all grades of age and station, thought and intelligence, bound, if he gives something to the few, to give much to the many. The pulpit, except perhaps in a few special cases, is not a place for abstract theology, pious meditation, sweet converse with choice and congenial souls. It is a place for speaking to the mind and heart of the people, appealing to arguments, suggesting ideas, dealing with experiences, not foreign to them, and, above all, striving to bring out, in living clearness and force, such conceptions as float vague and imperfect, dimly seen and feebly grasped, in the minds of ordinary men. Well did Taylor know this great secret of true oratory. To invest old truths with a new light and beauty, to lead gradually, now from ignorance to knowledge, now from half-knowledge to full comprehension—always in sympathy with his hearers' thoughts, and yet teaching them to gaze through his eyes at what they could but see for themselves by glimpses—this is the object which, amidst all his discursive flights and imaginative richness of illustration, he keeps always before him, and to which he at least designs to make all else absolutely subordinate.

(*c*) At this point again, by a natural transition, I

would ask you to pass on from the substance of Taylor's preaching to his style and method. If I touch more briefly than perhaps might be expected on the singular magnificence and beauty of his style, it is partly because it has been dwelt upon again and again, sometimes with a subtle felicity of criticism, oftener with an exuberant fervour of eulogy; partly because (to say the truth) it seems to me questionable praise of any orator, and especially of a preacher, to consider him as distinguished and characterised by style rather than by thought. Surely to style the old proverb of the "art" (if art it be) "of concealing art" most especially applies. If ever style attracts observation and admiration to itself, instead of simply enabling the thing spoken to find its way to the thought and feeling and imagination—from that moment the highest and purest art is as truly lost, as in a portrait where the elaborate beauty of drapery, or even the delicacy of flesh tint or the bright gold of the hair, distracts the eye from the depiction of the soul looking through the face. It may be true—probably it is true—that felicity of detail, both in thought and in language, impresses the ordinary hearer far more easily than the broad conception and the close working out of the great ideas of the whole. Men easily tolerate "a tale of little meaning," if only "the words are strong." But it is the task of all really great orators, especially of all who are preachers of God's

Word, to raise men above this weakness, rather than to condescend to it. If men go away from a sermon possessed and fascinated by impressions of eloquence, felicity, subtlety, imagination, learning, the preacher must hold that from the highest point of view his work has been a failure, and not a success.

Now, I dare not assert that Jeremy Taylor has always avoided this danger. Compared with his Greek prototype, if indeed we have Chryso-tom's oratory as it actually was, his style is richer, more copious, more imaginative—to use the old expression, less Attic and more Asiatic, less Demosthenic and more Ciceronian. In the exuberance of his illustrations, whether drawn from fancy or from memory, from the study of nature or from the stores of an extraordinary learning, I cannot say that the thought is never overlaid, that the simplicity of the outline is never impaired, or the massiveness of expression never frittered away. But he would not have been the great orator that he really was, if this had been the rule instead of the exception. I must believe that wherever it occurs, if it does occur, he would have resented admiration and eulogy for what he must have rightly grieved over as a defect.

For, after all, what most forcibly strikes any attentive reader in him is his masterly employment of that method of treatment which appears to dis-

tinguish all popular oratory of the highest class—the presentation of comparatively few and simple ideas, every one of them worked out with an absolute and exhaustive completeness, viewed under a variety of aspects, illustrated from every side by comparison, by example, by authority—presented not in vague abstraction, fit only for the school, but in the concrete reality, which alone comes home to the mass of men—appealing now to the thought, now to the conscience, now to the emotions of fear and love, now to the imaginative conceptions of terror or beauty—till they paint themselves line by line on the soul, and live in the memory, of the hearers.

Nowhere, I am bold to say, is this great principle better exemplified than in Taylor's grander sermons. Always he is possessed, and he possesses his hearers, with the great idea of the whole. There is extraordinary felicity, terrible force, imaginative beauty of expression; but it never seems elaborated for its own sake; it pours forth freely, naturally, as it seems irresistibly, from an eloquent soul on fire with noble thought. There is an exuberance of quotation from writers of all ages—heathen and Christian, poet, historian, philosopher; there is a wealth of allusion to stories, sometimes well known, sometimes obscure, which must have taxed the knowledge and the ingenuity of his audience (unless, indeed, some were added in the *secunda cura* of

the study before publication*); there are figures drawn from nature and life, always eloquent and striking, sometimes quaint and fanciful, often touched with the imagination of a true poet. But all these seem to grow naturally out of a richly stored memory and quick imagination, merely to illustrate the main conception, the greatness of which is never lost. They are infinitely unlike mere conceits, obtruding themselves on the mind to challenge inordinate attention and admiration, and quotations culled laboriously from a commonplace book, and strung on the thinnest thread of thought (if, indeed, there be any thread at all), simply to catch the eye by their sparkle, and to disguise poverty of idea or the feebleness of moral impression. Everywhere in Taylor's Sermons there is a broad, simple unity of conception, underlying all the infinite fulness and variety of detail. Under all his living and breathing eloquence there may be traced a strong backbone of coherent thought. Even what seems at times some excess of division and of elaboration clearly arises from a wise determination to leave no gaps to be supplied by the hearers. For

* Most readers of the Sermons, as they now stand, will be inclined to doubt, with Heber, whether the little congregation at the Golden Grove could have been supposed to understand such allusions, as the allusions to "Atilius Aviola," and the "Libyan lion which broke out and killed two Roman boys," or to appreciate the references to ancient poetry and philosophy, with which some sermons may be said to bristle.

every true orator knows well, that the most essential point in good popular teaching is to lead the mind gradually on, requiring of it at each stage just that one step, whether of intelligence or logical inference, which, if it be clearly set forth as one, and one only, the dullest understanding will hardly refuse to take.

It is easy to illustrate from Taylor's writings these great principles of true oratorical method.

I think they may be clearly traced even in those isolated figures of half-poetical mataphor, which have been so often quoted. The style of his painting in these is not the bold and suggestive sketch, but the full elaborate picture, each detail carefully finished, and the whole carefully grouped together. Perhaps this elaboration interferes occasionally with their poetic beauty, because it leaves so little to the imagination of the hearer, and cares not to suggest more than it reveals. But for the purpose of the orator—bent upon possessing the soul of the ordinary hearer with a complete and vivid idea, and aware that only by degrees can such ideas be received, line upon line, into the minds of the mass of men, which move slowly—this loss of poetic beauty is more than compensated by the gain in fulness and depth of impression. The writer, whose words remain for retrospection and study, may delight in allusive suggestion or brilliant epigram. The speaker, who has to carry his hearers with him, must necessarily seek above all things to lay firm

hold of the average mind of his audience, and to work his idea gradually into the understanding, the imagination, and the heart.

I will take an instance of this kind of oratorical figure, which has not, so far as I know, been frequently quoted, illustrating (perhaps some critics will think to excess) this exhaustive working out of metaphor, enforcing the conception and application of every detail to the things signified.

"But so have I seen the returning sea enter upon the strand; and the waters, rolling towards the shore, throw up little portions of the tide, and retire as if nature meant to play, and not to change the abode of waters; but still the flood crept by little steppings, and invaded more by his progressions than he lost by his retreat; and having told the number of its steps, it possesses its new portion till the angel calls its back that it may leave its unfaithful dwelling of the sand. So is the pardon of our sins; it comes by slow motions, and first quits a present death, and turns, it may be, into a sharp sickness; and if that sickness prove not health to the soul, it washes off, and, it may be, will dash against the rock again, and proceed to take off the several instances of anger and the periods of wrath; but all this while it is uncertain concerning our final interest, whether it be ebb or flood; and every hearty prayer and every bountiful alms still enlarges the pardon, or adds a degree of probability and hope; and then

a drunken meeting, or a covetous desire, or an act of lust, or looser swearing, idle talk, or neglect of religion, makes the pardon retire; and while it is disputed between Christ and Christ's enemy who shall be Lord, the pardon fluctuates like the wave, striving to climb the rock, and is washed off like its own retinue; and it gets possession by time and uncertainty, by difficulty and the degrees of a hard progression." *

So, again, it is worth while to observe the true oratorical instinct, by which a merely commonplace metaphor is brought out into force of drawing and fulness of colour in his sermon on the "Miracles of the Divine Mercy."

"For so have I known a luxuriant vine swell into irregular twigs and bold excrescences, and spend itself in leaves and little rings, and afford but trifling clusters to the winepress, and a faint return to his heart which longed to be refreshed with a full vintage; but when the lord of the vine had caused the dressers to cut the wilder plant and made it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of useless leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy bunches, and made accounts of that loss of blood by the return of fruit. So is an afflicted province cured of its surfeits, and punished for its sins, and bleeds for its long riot, and is left ungoverned for

* Sermon on "Godly Fear," Part II.

its disobedience, and chastised for its wantonness; and when the sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joys of restitution, and gives God thanks for His rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord."

Nor is it otherwise if, dropping all metaphor, we take simple description, as in a striking passage in the second Advent Sermon, drawing out the visible and significant likeness of the torments of the unquiet conscience as an earnest of the unspeakable terrors of the Great Day.

"For I have sometimes seen persons surprised in a base action, and taken in the circumstances of crafty theft and secret injustices, before their excuse was ready; they have changed their colour, their speech hath faltered, their tongue stammered, their eyes did wander and fix nowhere, till shame made them sink into their hollow eyepits, to retreat from the images and circumstances of discovery; their wits are lost, their reason useless, the whole order of the soul is discomposed, and they neither see, nor feel, nor think, as they used to do, but they are broken into disorder by a stroke of damnation and a lesser stripe of hell. . . .

"If guilt will make a man despair, and despair will make a man mad, confounded and dissolved in all the region of his senses and more noble faculties, that he shall neither feel, nor hear, nor see, anything

but spectres and illusions, devils and frightful dreams, and hear noises, and shriek fearfully, and look pale and distracted like a hopeless man from the horrors and confusion of a lost battle upon which all his hopes did stand; then the wicked at the day of judgment must expect strange things and fearful, and such which now no language can express, and then no patience can endure."*

But I would rather illustrate this principle on a larger scale, by reference not to isolated figures, but to a whole group of sermons. Take the very first group of the published volume—the group of Advent Sermons. There runs through all one object, and this an object simple in its solemnity, to impress on the mind, in the spirit of the old *Dies Iræ*, a deep sense of the awfulness, the terrible majesty, the searching minuteness, the eternal issues of the Judgment Day.

But mark the completeness of its treatment, in which line after line is added to the picture, till it seems to grow out visibly before us.

First he will have us think of the "persons who shall be judged." He turns our eyes to that innumerable company, in whose very vastness the terror of judgment shall gather force and spread by contagion of fear, "and the amazement of the whole world shall unite as the sparks of a

* Second Advent Sermon.

blazing furnace into one globe of fire." Then, looking more closely on that company, he bids us think of meeting before the judgment-seat those whose light, "like tapers enkindled with a beam of the Sun of Righteousness," has shone before us in vain—those who, like the men of Nineveh and the Queen of the South, shame us, the children of the Kingdom, by their better use of lower advantages—those who have been the partners of our sins, the victims of our lusts, the followers of our corrupting example, the "souls now crying to the rocks to cover them," which but "for our perpetual temptations might have followed the Lamb in a white robe." Then, when thus he has brought home to us the idea of multitude, both in mass and in detail, he bids us consider that they form no abstract "Pythagorean number," but each is a living personal presence, before which there must be the terrible ordeal, perhaps the intolerable shame, of judgment.

Then he lifts our eyes above this awe-struck and expectant throng to the judgment-seat itself. He bids us mark "the sign of the Son of man," shining terribly in the heavens, the awful signs heralding the approach of judgment—the earth shaken, "as with those poor people near Hadria and the Mediterranean Sea, when their houses and cities are entering into graves;" the stars falling from heaven, the sun

turned into darkness, the moon into blood. He thrills us with an awful expectation, till the last dread moment shall come, and the Trumpet of the Archangel shall gather all, willing and unwilling, before the throne.

Next he will have us contemplate the Person of the Judge Himself. What shall it be to "look on Him whom we have pierced"—to behold the Holy Face which by its agony bought salvation for us in vain, "and from which we turned away and fell in love with death and kissed deformity and sin"—on the Saviour, whose unceasing intercession for us in heaven we have frustrated, denying Him that "joy so great that it runs over and wets the fair brows and beauteous locks of cherubim and seraphim," whose love we have trampled under our feet, and crucified Him afresh in open shame—on Him, whose brethren, committed to our charge here, we have neglected, and, by leaving all undone towards them, have wantonly left all undone towards Him? But shall His mercy swallow up judgment? No! He reminds us solemnly of the foretastes of God's severity of judgment here, as in outward punishments so in the inward torments of conscience; and bids us infer from these imperfect anticipations what shall be the awfulness of the full cup of the wrath of God. Then, in a bold and terrible figure, he at last arrays before us the three accusers — the Saviour whose salvation we trod under foot, and whose daily

mercies we despised; the conscience within, stirred to perfect memory and to infallible insight into things as they are; the Evil One exulting over those whom Christ has bought, but who without price have sold themselves to him.*

Then, lastly, he reminds us from Holy Scripture that the judgment is for things done in the body—in this body which so distracts the soul by its needs, in this visible life of the world, so full of folly and blindness and evil. True, it shall be with equity; it shall be with mercy; it shall be from a loving Judge. But (he cries out earnestly) think of the incalculable issues! On the one side (briefly touched) the eternal and unspeakable happiness, on the other side the eternal fire! It may be (for he turns not aside for such questions)—it may be an everlasting suffering; it may be after the term of punishment, a

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* The passage itself is bold and terrible. "Cannot the Accuser truly say to the Judge of such persons, 'They were Thine by Creation, but mine by choice. Thou didst redeem them, indeed, but they sold themselves to me for a trifle. Thou diedst for them, but they obeyed my commandment. . . . I never hanged upon the Cross three long hours for them, or endured the labours of a poor life thirty-three years together for their interest. Only when they were Thine by the merit of Thy death they quickly became mine by the demerit of their ingratitude. When Thou hadst clothed their soul with Thy robe . . . we stripped them naked as their shame, and only put on a robe of darkness, and they thought themselves secure, and went dancing to their grave, like a drunkard to a fight, or a fly into a candle: and, therefore, they that did partake with us in our fault, must divide with us in our portion and fearful interest.'"

destruction of the soul—it may perhaps (for so much he dares to hope) be a suffering which has its limit, but yet in itself and within that limit is infinite, inconceivable, the very essence of remorseful sorrow and of fiendish evil in the soul itself.

So having drawn out the whole picture, till it possesses the soul with an almost intolerable power —such (he thinks) as, rightly understood, must solemnise and even sadden the whole tenour of a thoughtful life—then, and not till then, he turns on his hearers once more with the great Advent exhortation, "Watch, repent, and pray," while "thy day," the day of salvation, lasts, before that great day, which is God's day, comes. For now surely (he may think) it will come home with at least some thought of its real awfulness to every soul, not utterly hardened, not utterly dead alike to God's terror and God's love.

It is indeed a terrible Sermon. I do not put it forth as a complete specimen of the matter of Taylor's teaching, though (as I have said) that teaching seems to me largely cast in this mould of severity and sadness—in this view we might well consider on the other side his sermons on "Growth in Grace" and the "Miracles of the Divine Mercy." But I place it before you as a striking example of that true oratorical method, in which so many preachers are deficient—the strong grasp of a few leading ideas, and the bringing them home again and again, without any absolute and

wearisome repetition, but with every possible illustration to the understanding and imagination, every possible enforcement on the conscience, every appeal to the heart. For it is this which, even coming from those to whom the golden eloquence of our great preacher is a thing inimitable, hardly comprehensible, yet sends our hearers away, not with a few notions vaguely suggested, or a slight surface impression on the heart, transitory as the mere ripple on the water, but with at least one idea deeply fixed, almost incapable of being shaken off, sure to recur again and again, in the critical hour of trial or in the silent watches of the night. In this, far more than in the oft-quoted passages of isolated grandeur, I trace the great orator. In this (I may add), rather than in those inimitable beauties of style and thought, grasped only by the few, and only too apt to pass into unconscious caricature in the hands of the many, we may take him as our model.

III. But the exhaustion of time, rather than subject, warns me to conclude.

I come back to the words of the text as a not inappropriate description of our great preacher.

Above all things he was "an eloquent man," a great orator. Not a great originator and leader of thought; for such men are often, like Moses, "slow of speech"—because their thoughts are too great for utterance. Not a keen, hard, scientific theologian—for this his mind was too exuberant

and discursive, perhaps his heart too large. "An eloquent man," if ever such there was, skilled to play, softly or loudly, on all the strings of the human soul.

"An eloquent man and learned," "mighty in the Scriptures," and (like, no doubt, the great Alexandrine teacher) in all the various learning which may conduce to the better knowledge of them. For undoubtedly Taylor's learning, great and multifarious, often quaint and recondite, as it is, is all made tributary to the gospel. He is not mainly a scholar or critic, not mainly a historian or a poet, still less a searcher into the depths of science. He is always the preacher of God's Word, of moral and spiritual truth. In that lies his real strength. In all writings he is mighty, but above all and below all in the Holy Writings of that higher lore.

Yes! and "fervent in Spirit." The first, second, and third quality of the preacher is earnestness—earnestness which is "fervour," kindled by a fire within. Of none more than Taylor can it be said "Fervet, immensusque ruit." That fervour may be subdued to gravity and sadness; it may flash out in the lightning of burning indignation; it may shine out like a sunbeam to warm, to enlighten, and to cheer. But it always exists; in one form or other it is always to be felt. There is not a page of Taylor's Sermons which is cold or dull.

In the strength of all these qualities—the rich and

varied eloquence, the wide, free play of learning, the undying fire of high spiritual earnestness—from the beginning to the end of his life, he certainly "taught diligently the things of the Lord." We trace in his history no desire to rule the world in spiritual power; no desire to dazzle it by splendour or fame; no desire to "burst into the silent sea" of original discovery. His desire is simply and solely to be a teacher for God, a messenger to bring souls to Christ.

Probably, again (like the original of my text), he was not an apostle, to move or convert the world, but rather one "to help those who had believed"—to build up, to advance, to lead on from faith to holiness. Perhaps, especially, he was fitted to do this work on those who had culture and education and power of thought, rather than to speak with vehement and concentrated simplicity to the hearts of the people. Each man has his own mission, and for him that mission is the highest. Taylor's own life (again, perhaps, like Chrysostom's) has about it the calm beauty of that continual growth in grace which he has so beautifully described—"days linked each to each by natural piety"—rather than the great struggles and throes of conversion, now depressing to agony, now exalting to spiritual rapture.

As his life was, so also his teaching. Possibly for the message of God's salvation in the hour of spiritual darkness and ignorance, or in the moment of first conversion to God, we may turn by preference

to others. But, if a man will be taught the lesson of holy living and holy dying in the faith of Christ; if he will be shown how, in freedom of thought and simplicity of belief, in the right harmony of corporate and individual Christian life, to be prepared for Heaven; if he will understand how all gifts of knowledge and imagination, of wisdom, and power, and beauty, can be consecrated to God, making rich undercurrents of harmony for the clear dominant note of the Gospel; if he desires to look on always to Heaven, to strive, to pray, to hope for its spiritual perfection, and to have the foretaste of that perfection even now, as a music of the soul—I know not how, under God, he can be taught this better than by sitting at the feet of our English Chrysostom.

SANDERSON,

THE JUDICIOUS PREACHER.

"And the families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez; the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, *and* Suchathites. These *are the* Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab."—

1 *Chronicles* ii. 55.

"And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow.

"And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep *me* from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested."—1 *Chronicles* iv. 9, 10.

SYNOPSIS.

JABEZ AND THE SCRIBES.

I.

Scribe element in the Christian Ministry recognised by our Lord—A rule thus supplied for Christian teachers—*generally*—*individually*—Work before the Christian Scribe, especially in our own Church—A learned Ministry does not contradict 1 Cor. i. 20.

II.

Bearing upon Sanderson—His assertion of the necessity of a learned Ministry.

III.

Brief sketch of Sanderson's life, 1587–1662—Delivery of his sermons—Their style: its *pungency, pregnancy, strength.*

IV.

Main characteristics of Sanderson's teaching. 1. He preaches to the *conscience*—His philosophy of conscience. 2. His *Churchmanship*.

V.

Three lessons to be learned from the *spirit* of Sanderson's teaching: 1. To aim at *fixity* and *solidity* of moral teaching—Warning from the life of George Sand. 2. The happy mean between *Cœnobialism* and *Puritanism*. 3. *Quietness*. (*a*) In preaching and doctrine. (*b*) In ourselves.

THE very fragments of Holy Scripture are precious. Seeds of thought are often deposited in the cleft of some historical parenthesis. Instruction is bequeathed in scraps of geography or genealogy.

Jabez is a town of Judah. That tribe seem all along to have possessed the faculty of attracting and absorbing Gentiles. Three branches of Kenites were admitted into it among the scribes—the teachers and copyists of the law.

And with this place, Jabez, we naturally associate the man whose brief and touching story we have just heard. In some way which we are left to surmise, he was a child of sorrow. In old English romance there is a knight who bore a name of like signification. The poet makes him cry—

> "This is what my mother said should be,
> When the fierce pains took her in the fores',
> The deep draughts of death in bearing me:
> 'Son,' she said, 'thy name shall be of sorrow;
> Tristram art thou call'd for my death's sake.'
> So she said, and died in the drear forest.
> Grief since then his home with me doth make."

Even so the mother of Jabez gives him his name, "because," said she, "I bare him with sorrow," with toil and pang.

But this Tristram of the Old Testament lived to disappoint the auguries of evil which gathered round his name—lived, like the good bishop of whose sermons I am to speak to you this afternoon, to be a saintly old man, of weightier dignity than his brethren. His piety, his aspiration, his purity, are summed up in a prayer of few lines:

> "O that blessing Thou wouldst bless me very greatly;
> O that Thou wouldst make my boundary much;
> That Thou wouldst do for me afar from evil,
> That it may not grieve me with its touch."

This may literally have been the Collect of Jabez. At all events, every true life shapes itself into a few words of prayer. And the life-prayer had a life-answer. "God granted him that which he requested." *We* are what *our prayers* are.

I.

I do not know that one can preface a consideration of Bishop Sanderson as a preacher much more fitly than by observing that there is a true *scribe element* in the Christian ministry. We recognise it by our old English equivalent for the *sopher*, the γραμματεύς, the *scriba*. We call the minister a "*clerk* in orders."

Our Lord recognises this side of the ministry.

He describes various aspects of the work and qualifications of His messengers when He says, "Behold! I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and *scribes*."* More markedly still: "Every *scribe* which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." St. Matthew adds: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished *these parables*." Then this is a parable too—the parable of the study and the library, the parable of those who ply the pen. Robert Sanderson was doing his Master's work as truly when he was preparing his lectures 'De Obligatione Conscientiæ' to be delivered from the Regius Professor of Divinity chair at Oxford, as when he was pleading for the poor, or praying with the sick, in his Lincolnshire parish.

These words of our Lord supply a rule for the substance of Christian teaching both *generally* and as regards the *individual scribe*.

Generally, in the language of the Canticles, "at his gates are to be all manner of pleasant fruits, *new and old*, which he has laid up."† They are to be the produce not only of this year, but of years back—not only of the moment or of the week, but of much silent preparation in the past. The scribe is neither to produce the new without the old, nor

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* St. Matthew xxiii. 34. † Canticles vii. 13.

the old without the new—but each in connection with the other.

But, further, as regards each Gospel scribe, our Saviour's words imply that the treasure of knowledge and truth must be *individualized*. It must pass into the substance of his mind and thought, of his heart and soul. It must be appropriated and assimilated. It must be *his*, "his treasure." So far as he is a scribe, "he bringeth forth," a word implying *copiousness* of resource.* He is not ignominiously to produce the same again and again—or, more ignominiously still, to steal—or worse still in this case, to buy—from another.

And thus the work before the scribe instructed unto the kingdom is perpetually growing. As he studies his New Testament, deep opens after deep—distinction after distinction. It is seen that the Greek of the New Testament alone must be almost the study of a life. The very chapters and Psalms which he so often reads and hears exact some knowledge of Hebrew. This is one practical use of the Daily Service. He who possesses the spirit of a Gospel scribe will scarcely be content with the vague and far-off beauty of the melodies of the English Psalter. He will travel, with grammar and lexicon in hand, until he reaches the fountain of their music.

And, in the case of a clergyman of our commu-

* ἐκβάλλει, '*copiose*,' Bengel.

nion, the Gospel scribe is not the minister of a sect, but of a Church which claims her part in the inheritance of ages. He repeats creeds, each clause of which comprises a history, and formularies which are haunted with memories of every age of Christendom. The peculiar standpoint of the English Reformation places him in the centre between two great controversies. "The true *belief* and right *understanding* of the great article concerning the Scriptures' sufficiency," says Sanderson, "is to my apprehension the most characteristic note of the right English Protestant, as he stands in the middle between, and distinguished from, the *Papist* on the one hand, and the (sometimes styled) *Puritan* on the other. I know not how he can be a *Papist* that truly *believeth* it; or he a *Puritan* that rightly *understandeth* it."*

More especially the Prayer-Book is an eminence which rises as we rise. It is an instrument from which we may draw music in proportion to the increase of our skill. No true knowledge need be useless to one of our ministers. If the fabric of his church is to be improved, and its worship rendered worthier, Art must be his guide. If he is thrown into the midst of a poor population, or among the families of workmen, the principles of political economy will enable him to teach many valuable lessons. Logic will

* XXXVI. Sermons, the *Preface*, p. 81.

direct his arguments, literature mould his language, metaphysics develope the powers which enable him to grapple with great problems. Theology is a temple where even the eye of a casual observer can perceive a certain solidity and symmetry. But the trained student reads a thousand lessons in the interlacing lines. The Christian scribe should be a student from the day when his eyes are keen to the day when he must rub away the mist from his glasses. It is idle to say that the knowledge of theology impairs the delight and freshness of Scripture truth. It might as well be pretended that a knowledge of botany impairs the fragrance of the rose. It is not true here, as has been objected to the dogmatic critic upon poetry, that he is drawing hard, unvarying lines round objects which cease to be lovely when they do not tremble with every breath.

Those who urge the necessity of a learned ministry do not forget St. Paul's passionate exclamation, "Where is the wise? where is the *scribe?*"* They do not forget that very plain men have done great things for God and souls. But they do believe that the best gifts which men can bring should be presented at the altar,—that Scripture cannot be truly expounded, nor the balance of truth permanently preserved, without a reading and thinking clergy. Whether, indeed, this is the way to prominent suc-

* 1 Cor. i. 20.

cess, as things are at present, may well be doubted. There is a sweet persuasiveness, a tender unction about some preachers, which is one of the best gifts of the Blessed Spirit. But there is also a mincing plausibility, its counterfeit, which goes a long way. A good voice; a pompous manner; tact enough to avoid certain subjects; a few catchwords—a very few months will make a scribe instructed in that kind of lore. But if we would know for ourselves and expound to others some of the mind of God as revealed in His Law; if we would bring some words of Christ a little nearer to the hearts of men; if we would carry on the traditions of the past; if we would win like Jabez a place in the family of scribes;—we shall aim at something better than this. The humble acquirements even of rural congregations afford us no dispensation from this duty. The old Rabbis make a significant remark upon the poor man's offering of fowls at the close of the first chapter of Leviticus. The priest is to bring it to the altar, wring off the head, burn it on the altar, wring out the blood here, fling the crop and feathers there, cleave it with the wings without dividing it asunder. What intricacy and prolixity of rubric about a poor man's pigeon! Just so. Because it *was* a poor man's. The priest was reminded by these exuberant details that he was to bestow as much labour upon the poorest as upon the richest.

II.

These observations bear directly upon good Bishop Sanderson. In the numerous sermons which he was called upon to address to the clergy from time to time, he rarely failed to insist upon this point. Take the following quaint but significant passage for a specimen:

"I judge no man's conscience or calling who is in the Ministry, be his gifts never so slender; I dare not deny him the benefit of his clergy, if he can but read; if his own heart condemn him not, neither do I. But yet this I say, as the times now are, wherein learning aboundeth even unto wantonness; and wherein the world is full of questions, and controversies, and novelties, and niceties in religion; and wherein most of our gentry, mere women and all (by the advantage of long peace, and the custom of modern education, together with the help of a multitude of English books and translations), are able to look through the ignorance of a clergyman, and censure it, if he be tripping in any point of history, cosmography, moral or natural philosophy, divinity, or the arts; yea, and to chastise his very method and phrase, if he speak loosely or impertinently, or but improperly. I say, as these times are, I would not have a clergyman content himself with every *mediocrity* of gifts; but by his prayers, care, and industry, improve those he hath, so as he may be able upon great occasions to *impart*

a spiritual gift to the people of God, *whereby they may be established;* and to speak with such understanding, sufficiency, and pertinency, in some good measure of proportion to the quickness and ripeness of these present times, as they that love not his *coat* may yet approve his *labours*. They that are called *spiritual persons* should strive to encircle the name by a more than ordinary *manifestation* of spiritual gifts." *

III.

Before discussing more fully the characteristics of this most judicious of English preachers, it may be well to remind ourselves, however briefly, of the leading dates and incidents of his life.

Robert Sanderson was born in 1587. He graduated and became a Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, in 1606, at the early age of nineteen. Then he became sub-rector and Prælector of Logic. His career as a writer, like that of two eminent archbishops in our own day, began with a logical treatise. Sanderson's logic maintained its place in academical education for several generations, and is sometimes referred to with respect even in the present day. Sanderson's labours at Oxford took place when the Calvinistic controversies were at their height. If we may judge by traces in a few of his earlier sermons,

* *Ad Clerum*, the Third Sermon, pp. 47, 48.

his mind was at first inclined in that direction. King James's letters addressed to the University, strongly advised divinity students to turn from modern forms and systems to Fathers and Councils, and the advice was followed with conscientious earnestness by Sanderson's passionate loyalty. In 1619 the Prælector of Logic became Rector of Boothby Pannell, which living he held for more than forty years. "In this Boothby Pannell," writes Isaac Walton, "he either found or made his parishioners peaceable, and complying with him in the constant, decent, and regular service of God. And thus his parish, his patrons, and he lived together in a religious love and a contented existence. He, not troubling their thoughts by preaching high and useless notions, but such, and only such plain truths as were necessary to be known, believed, and practised in order to the honour of God and their own salvation. This excellent man did not think his duty discharged by only reading the Church prayers, catechising, preaching, and administering the Sacraments generally. He strove to reconcile differences and prevent law-suits, both in his parish and in the neighbourhood. To which may be added his often visiting sick and disconsolate families." Nor were his gifts and graces exclusively confined to this favoured parish. As one of the chaplains of Charles I., he preached from time to time before that Monarch, who passed upon his sermons the noble panegyric: "To

other preachers I carry my *ears*, but my conscience to Dr. Sanderson." In 1642 he was appointed to the Regius Professor's chair in the University of Oxford. His attention had been specially turned to what was then known as Casuistical Divinity. But the casuistry which Sanderson studied was not the minute science which is to prepare the priest for the technicalities of the confessional. It was a form of Moral Science which aimed at referring cases of doubtful or conflicting duties to broad moral principles recognised in Scripture or confirmed by right reason, and which tried to make the well-instructed Christian, not a tool in another man's hand, but a living law unto himself. From this study he found the happiest results. He was able to give a solid and rational peace to many harassed minds. His biographer writes that he "often blessed God that he had inclined his heart to do it to the meanest of any of those poor but precious souls for which his Saviour vouchsafed to be crucified." In 1646 Sanderson gave the most finished fruit of these labours to his University in the form of his once famous lectures on *Oaths*, and on *the obligation of Conscience*. In 1648 he was ejected from the University. Even in the retirement of his parish he was watched and worried with a pertinacious malignity. The soldiers of the Commonwealth jeered at him as he read service, and even forced the Prayer-Book from him, tearing the leaves, and calling upon him for extempore prayers.

To those who condoled with him on these outrages and on the loss of his Divinity Chair, which reduced his wife and children almost to absolute want, he used to say, "God did not send me into this world to *do* my own will, but to *suffer* His; and I will obey it." At the period of the Restoration, Sanderson was 73, but he accepted the Bishopric of Lincoln (somewhat too readily, it might seem, for old Isaac Walton's awful reverence for the office), and was consecrated October 28, 1660. In 1662 he was called to his eternal rest. How, when he took to his bed, "that he might receive a new assurance for the pardon of his sins past, and be strengthened in the way to the New Jerusalem, he took the blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of his and our blessed Jesus"; how the dying servant of God desired absolution, and humbly took off his cap, that the chaplain's hand might be laid upon his bare head; how he said again and again the 103rd Psalm—all this it seems almost sacrilege to tell in other words than those which have charmed eight generations of English Churchmen.

To pass from the preacher to his sermons—

To his delivery they do not appear to have owed much. It was a saying among his friends that "the best sermons ever *written* were never *preached*." While his memory was little short of miraculous, his bashfulness was so great that he was utterly incapable of *extempore* discourse. Upon one occa-

sion, when he made the attempt before a small and rural congregation, he handed his note-book to Hammond before entering the pulpit, and became confused. When he had ended his short sermon, as the friends walked homeward, he said with a pained earnestness to Hammond, "Good Doctor! give me my sermon, and know that neither you nor any man living shall persuade me to preach again without my notes."

The *divisions* of the sermons, over-technical for modern taste, are yet by no means so scholastic as those of most of his contemporaries of both parties. Pungency, pregnancy and strength are the characteristics of his style.

Of this *pungency* he is well aware. "I am willing," he says, "to sharpen my style, I confess, that it might enter, as it was but needful, where the skin was callous. But with the only intention (as the great Searcher of all hearts knoweth) by putting the patient to a little smart at the first piercing of the sore, to give future ease to the part affected; and not all by angering the sore, to make it worse."* Some specimens may be given—(1) Of the common principles underlying extremes: "In this *uncharitableness* (such a coincidence there is sometimes of extremes) the Separatists and the Romanists, consequently to their otherwise most

* Preface, p. 88.

distant principles, do fully agree; like Samson's foxes tied together by the tails to set all on fire, although their faces look quite contrary ways. These our brethren of the Separation are so violent in unchurching all the world but themselves, that they thrust out men of the whole flock of Christ in a far narrower pingle than ever the Donatists did, concluding the communion of saints within the compass of a private parlour or two in Amsterdam."* (2) Of atheists, of a violent and profane type: "There are men in the world so deeply possessed with a spirit of atheism, that though they will be of *any* religion (in show) to serve their turns, yet they are resolved to be (indeed) of *none*, till all men be agreed of one;—resolution no less desperate for the *soul*, if not rather much more than it would be for the *body*, if a man should vow he would never eat till all the clocks in the city should strike together."† (3) Of pretended zeal for reformation in the Church: "Show of sanctity and purity, pretension of religion and reformation, is the *wool* that the wolf wrappeth about him when he meaneth to do most mischief with least suspicion."‡ (4) Of vague charges of Romanism: "For the *Popishness* first,—unless we shall sue out a writ *de finibus regendis*, it will be hard to find out a way how to

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* *Ad Aulam*, the Third Sermon, p. 399.

† *Ad Aulam*, the Ninth Sermon, p. 485. ‡ Ibid., p. 489.

bring this contention to an *issue*, much less to an *end;* the term hath been so strangely extended, and the limits thereof (if yet it have any) so uncertain."*

For the more important characteristics of *pregnancy* and *strength*, I may do best to refer to three connected sermons, which seem to me the most eloquent and popular which we possess from Sanderson's pen, though preached when he was comparatively young and somewhat deficient in that exactitude and temperance balance of doctrine so remarkable at a subsequent period, and to which I refer in styling him "the Judicious Preacher."

These three sermons are on the subject of the temporary humiliation of Ahab, and the mercy accorded to him by God.† The first sermon is mainly concerned with the question how far a hypocrite may go in the performance of holy duties, and with inferences from the success of Ahab's humiliation. It contains also some most solemn passages upon the power of God's word. On Ahab's fit of remorse, he exclaims: "Great is the force of natural conscience, even in the most wicked men, especially when it is awakened by the *hand* of God in any heavy affliction, or by the *voice* of God threatening it with vengeance. It pursueth the guilty soul with continual and restless clamour, and

* Preface, p. 73. † 1 Kings xxi. 19.

he seeth that something he must do, if he knew what, to *stop the mouth of conscience;* and so he falleth a repenting and reforming, and resolving of a new course, which though it be not sincere, and so cannot work a perfect cure upon a wounded conscience, but that it still rankleth inward, yet it giveth some present ease, and allayeth the anguish of it for the time."* On the apparent virtues and graces of radically ungodly men, he strikingly remarks: "What a dark shame it would be for us, who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, not to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit in some good abundance, seeing the *counterfeits* of these graces are oftentimes so eminent, even in *hypocrites* and *castaways!* Shall a piece of rotten wood, or a glowworm shine so bright, and our holy lamps, fed with oil from heaven, burn so dim?"† His tests for discerning real from apparent grace, vital religion from hypocrisy, are singularly judicious. "Hypocrisy is spun of a fine thread, and not easily discernible. Divines have set down sundry notes and marks, but I commend to your observation two only, which two are indeed as good as a thousand, namely, *integrity* and *constancy;* for these two are never in the hypocrite. First, for *integrity.* The hypocrite might go far in hearing, in believing, in

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* *Ad Populum*, the First Sermon on 1 Kings xxi. 29, p. 155.
† Ibid., p. 156.

sorrowing, in reforming, in suffering. He receiveth the word with joy, so far as it fitteth with his humour, and keepeth fair and far off from meddling with his bosom sin; but he is not *equally* delighted with every part and with every point of God's word and truth. If the right string be touched, if his sweet darling sin be stirred, that is harsh to him, he findeth no music in that; rub him where he is galled, and he kicketh at it. Herod heard John Baptist gladly, and did *many things* willingly, but when his incestuous marriage was meddled withal, then the Fox was convicted, and the hypocrite appeared in his own colours. And the young man, when Christ told him what he must do to inherit eternal life in the general, was no doubt a jolly, jocund man; but when Christ hitteth him home, and presseth upon his particular corruption (*one thing is wanting*), this nipped him in the head, and struck cold to his heart. . . ." * The rule never faileth, *quicquid propter Deum fit, æqualiter fit.* Then obedience, as it *disputeth* not the command, but obeyeth *cheerfully*: so neither doth it *divide* the command, but obeyeth *equally*. . . . The other is *constancy*—continuance or lasting. The seeming graces of the hypocrite may be as impetuous and forward for the time as the true graces of the sincere believer; nay, more forward oftentimes. . . . But

* *Ad Populum*, the First Sermon on 1 Kings xxi. 29, p. 158.

he setteth on too violently to hold out long. . . . The boy that goeth to his book no longer than his master holdeth the rod over him, the master's back once turned, away goeth the book, and he to play; and right so it is with the hypocrite. Take away the rod from Pharaoh, and he will be old Pharaoh still."* Very simple and child-like, but very solemn and awfully expressed is Sanderson's conviction of the reality of the function of conscience, and of the power of God's word. "We say, '*Words are but wind*'; and indeed the words of the best minister are no better, as they are breathed out by sinful mortal man, whose breath is in his nostrils; but yet the wind, as it is *breathed in*, and inspired by the powerful eternal Spirit of God, is strong enough (by His effectual working with it) not only to shake the top branches, but to rend up the very bottom root of the tallest cedar in Lebanon. The force of natural conscience, which the most presumptuous sinner can never so stifle, though he endeavours all he can to do it, but that it will be sometimes snubbing, and stinging, and lashing and vexing him with ugly representations of his past sins, and terrible suggestions of future vengeance, and then of all other times is the force of it most lively, when the voice of God in His Word awakeneth it after a long dead sleep. Then it riseth, and *Samson-*

* *Ad Populum*, the First Sermon on 1 Kings xxi. 29, p. 159.

like, rouseth up itself, and bestirreth itself lustily as a giant refreshed with wine; and it putteth the disquieted patient to such insufferable pain that he doth he knoweth not what, and seeketh for ease he knoweth not where. Then he would give all Dives his wealth for a dip of water to cool the heat he feeleth; then sackcloth and ashes, and fasting, and weeping and mourning, and rending the garments, and tearing the hair, and knocking the breast, and outcries to heaven, and all those other things which he could not abide to hear of whilst his conscience lay *fast asleep*, are now greedily entertained, and all too little. . . . Do, then, consider this and tremble, whosoever thou art, that in thy thoughts despiseth the holy Word of God, accounting of it but as of some *human invention* to keep fools in awe withal; and thou also . . . that *undervaluest* this precious treasure for the *meanness* or other *infirmities* of the earthen vessel wherein it is conveyed. Tell me, dost thou not herein struggle against the evidence of thine own heart? Doth not thine own conscience and experience tell thee that the sword of the Spirit hath a keen edge, and biteth and pierceth where it goeth? Hath it not sometimes galled, and rubbed, and lanced, and cut thee to the very bone, and entered even to the dividing asunder of the joints and of the marrow? Though perhaps it have not yet melted thy stony and obdurate heart, yet, didst thou never perceive it hammering about

it with sore strokes, and knocks as if it would shiver it into a thousand pieces? Doubtless thou hast; and if thou wouldst deny it, thy *conscience* is able to give thy *tongue* the lie, and to convince thee to thy face."* Like a good minister of Jesus Christ, he is no less eloquent in speaking peace to the penitent. Unless I am mistaken, there are few passages in the whole range of truly Evangelical preaching superior to that which follows: "Search the Scriptures, and say if things run not thus, as in the most ordinary course. God commandeth, and man disobeyeth. Man disobeyeth, and God threateneth. God threateneth, and man repenteth. Man repenteth, and God forbeareth. *Abimelech, thou art but a dead man, because of the woman which thou hast taken;* but Abimelech restoreth the prophet his wife untouched, and God spareth him, and he dieth not. *Hezekiah, put thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live;* but Hezekiah turneth his face to the wall, and prayeth, and weepeth, and God addeth to his days fifteen years. *Nineveh,* prepare for desolation, for now but *forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed;* but Nineveh fasted, and prayed, and repented—and Nineveh stood after more than forty years twice told. To show compassion and to forgive—that is the thing wherein He most of all delighteth; but to punish and take vengeance is (as some expound that in

* *Ad Populum,* the First Sermon on 1 Kings xxi. 29, pp. 162, 163.

Esay xxviii.) His *strange work*, a thing He taketh no pleasure in. As the bee laboureth busily all the day long, and seeketh to every flower and to every weed for honey, but stingeth not once unless she be ill provoked; so God bestirreth Himself, and His bowels yearn within Him to show compassion. 'Oh! Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, how shall I entreat thee? Why will ye die, O ye house of Israel?' But vengeance cometh on heavily and unwillingly, and draweth a sigh from Him, *Heu consolabor.* 'Ah! *I must;* I see there is no remedy; I *must ease me* of *Mine adversaries.* . . . *How* shall *I give thee up, Ephraim?*' * Consider this, and take comfort, all you that *mourn in Sion*, and groan under the weight of God's heavy displeasure. Why do you spend your strength and spirit in gazing with broad eyes altogether on God's justice or *truth?* Take them off a little, and refresh them by fastening them another while upon His *mercy.* Consider not only *what* He threateneth, but withal *why* He threateneth; it is that you may repent: and *withal how* He threateneth; it is unless you repent. He threateneth to cast down, indeed; but into *humiliation*, not into *despair.* He shooteth out His arrows, even bitter words; but, as Jonathan's arrows, for warning, not for destruction. Yea, but who am I, will some disconsolate soul say, that I should make

* *Ad Populum*, the First Sermon on 1 Kings xxi 29, pp. 170, 171.

God's threatenings void? or what my repentance, that it should cancel the oracles of truth? Poor, distressed soul! that thus disputest against thine own peace, but seest not the while the unfathomed depths of God's mercy, and the wonderful dispensations of His truth."* I shall close my citations from these remarkable sermons by a few sentences, which are more in Sanderson's usual style of powerful statement and clear resolution of a difficulty—unsurpassed subtlety of distinction, and that kind of brilliancy, and that only which is inseparable from the keenness of the logical weapon. On God's being said to *repent*, or change His purpose, he writes, "A point very useful and comfortable, if it be not derogatory to God's truth. Let us, therefore, first clear that. If God thus revoketh His threatenings, it seemeth He either before meant not what He spake when He threatened, or else after, when He revoketh, repenteth of what He meant; either of which to imagine, far be it from every Christian heart, since the one maketh God a *dissembler*, the other a *changeling;* the one chargeth him with *falsehood*, the other with *lightness*. And yet the Scriptures sometimes speak of God as if He *grieved* for what He did, or *repented* of what He spake, or *altered* what He had proposed. We are, therefore, to lay this as a firm ground and infallible, that our God is both

* *Ad Populum*, the First Sermon on 1 Kings xxi. 29, pp. 175, 176.

truly *unchangeable* and unchangeably *true.* 'He *is the same,* and His years *fail not;*' neither do His purposes fail, nor His promises fail, nor His threatenings fail, nor any of His words fail. As for those phrases, then, of *relenting, grieving,* and that συγκατάβασις, whereof St. Chrysostom so often speaketh, sheweth them—God speaketh to us; and therefore speaketh as we have to speak, and frameth His language to our dulness, and teacheth us by *our own phrases* what He would have us to learn; as nurses tell *half-syllables* and lisp out broken language to young children. But what is so spoken ἀνθρωποπαθῶς of God, after the *manner of men,* must yet be understood θεοπρεπῶς, so as befitteth the Majesty and perfection of His Divine Nature. When He *repenteth,* we are not so to conceive it as if God changed His mind, or altered anything of His everlasting purpose: it only importeth that He now doth not that which, so far as we could reasonably conjecture by His *words,* or *works,* or our *deserts,* or otherwise, seemed to us to have been His purpose to have done. This for the *phrases:* but yet the main doubt for the *thing* itself standeth uncleared—'*I will bring evil upon Ahab's house,* and yet *I will not bring it;*' is not this *yea* and *nay?* That of Aquinas and the Schoolmen is *true* but *subtile;* that though God never changeth His will, yet He sometimes willeth a change. That of Gregory is plainer and no less true; God sometimes changes the *sentence* which he hath *denounced,* but

never the *counsel* which He hath decreed. That which is plainest, and giveth fullest satisfaction, is briefly this: In the whole course of Scripture, God's *threatenings* (and so His *promises* too) have ever a condition annexed unto them in God's purpose, which though it be not ever (indeed but seldom) expressed, yet is ever included, and so to be understood. . . . But why is not that clause *expressed* then? may some demand. I answer—first, it *needeth* not; secondly, it *booteth* not."* Those who read such passages will do but scant justice to Sanderson unless they glance at his erudite margin, crowded with choice references to Scripture, a fabric of proof of which every brick was carefully rung before it was laid—enriched with admirably selected sentences from Fathers, Schoolmen, Canonists, modern divines, and ancient poets and philosophers. It would be a strange fancy which could speak of Sanderson wearing all "that weight of learning lightly like a rose." Sanderson never wore anything like a rose. But he does seem to wear it as the moose-deer carries its tremendous horns—a hundredweight of solid bone, forming part of the head, borne through life without apparent effort, and crushing down opposition by blows which are sure to be fatal to those who expose themselves to that ponderous impact.

* *Ad Populum*, the First Sermon on 1 Kings xxi. 29, pp. 172, 174.

IV.

When we pass from particular sermons of Sanderson to the main characteristics of his thought, it may, I think, be said that they are two:—(1) He preaches to the *conscience*, and (2) from the position of a decided, but quiet and sensible churchmanship.

1. He preaches to *conscience*.—Before being the *Preacher*, Sanderson had been the *Philosopher* of conscience.

Every student of such matters will read Grotius, to find in him a view of human nature which articulately recognises the momentous fact that man is a *social* no less truly than a *selfish* being, as the fundamental truth of law and morality. Just so, in order to have some conception of the furthest advance made by the *morality of conscience*, previous to the use of the distinctively modern school of ethics, he will look at the great ethical work of Sanderson, his 'Lectures on the Obligation of Conscience,' delivered at Oxford in 1647, four years before the publication of Hobbes's 'Leviathan.'

Conscience is defined as a habit or faculty of the practical intellect, by which the mind doth, by discourse of reason, apply the light that is in it to its own particular moral acts.

For the word defined—the *conscience* implies a knowledge on the part of a plurality of subjects, or a knowledge of a plurality of objects. If the former,

conscience implies a first knowledge on the part of God, and of the moral agent. If the latter, conscience implies the junction of knowledge to knowledge, *i.e.*, the knowledge of the universal principle to that of the special fact by applying the former to the latter. The *science* again is *subjectively* the habit by which we know; *objectively*, the thing known. So in *conscience*, the *science* may be of the principle, of the conclusion, of the whole syllogism, of an aggregate of syllogisms.

Sanderson has two great merits in dealing with this question—a wonderful mastery of the technicalities of the school-logic and sound good sense. The former sometimes leads him into a maze of sub-divisions. The latter fails him when he gets upon questionable usages which it seemed a point of honour to defend for his party. Thus he champions advowsons * against the necessity of the people's consent to the pastor's call, by asserting that advowsons have been secured to patrons by Parliament, *i.e.* in the last analysis, by the full consent of the people!

Very beautifully does he give the full Christian doctrine of conscience. "For by the Fall," he writes, "rectitude and integrity of conscience was lost, not the very nature of the thing; and, when we are regenerate and born again, there is not a new

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* Prælect. vii. 24.

infusion of a conscience previously non-existent, but that which previously existed—foul and defiled with sins,—now that it is sprinkled with the precious blood of Christ, is purified by Faith so as to please God."* He remarks with tact and sagacity that, for those who live under the Gospel revelation the object of conscience is extended beyond *agenda* to *credenda*.

These central thoughts occur again and again in Sanderson's sermons. He draws out into definite and articulate shape the great moral propositions which the light that is in us by nature or by grace virtually contains. He makes us examine them under the guidance of his sane and vigorous intellect. He then calls upon us to take our actions, and as reasonable men bring them under these moral and spiritual axioms.—To inform the unenlightened, to strengthen the scrupulous, to pacify the tender conscience, to make men pure, strong, manly, bright, by the purity, strength, breadth, clearness of the Gospel,—this was his aim.

2. Further, Sanderson believed that the Church of England had a great work to do; that without her the spiritual and the temporal life of England would lose in freedom and grandeur; that the essential principles of her Prayer-Book were principles that were worth contending for, even to spoiling of souls—even to prison and death. Only

* Dr. Whewell's edition, pp. 28, 114.

last week, under the shadow of Sanderson's own glorious minster, a number of American bishops were received with the high welcome which they deserved. It was to his faithfulness and that of others that the preservation of the acorn was due which has grown into the tree that overshadows so many lands.

Not without the scorn of a thoroughly logical intellect did he despatch the sophisms which have been imbibed as first principles by many earnest Englishmen. "The surplice, the cross in baptism, and the like," said anti-ceremonialists, "are but trifles to separate brethren." "That may be," said Sanderson, "but obedience to the rightful authority which enjoins these things is not a trifle." "We will have no detail in worship for which we have not express text of Scripture." "You are asking for that," cried the good Bishop, "which Scripture was never intended to give, and which you can produce even less than we. You are disrespectful to Scripture itself, by rejecting the general principles which it supplies." "I think," he says, "I could readily produce a full score of some ceremonies and circumstantial actions, *ordered*, *used*, or *done* by holy men, even in the Old Testament (who were yet more strictly tied to prescript forms than Christians are under the Gospel), for the doing whereof it doth not appear that they either had any command from God, or were guided by any former

precepts, or expected any other warrant than the use of their *reason* and prudential discourse. What warrant had David else for his purpose of building a Temple to God which God Himself approved of? or what Solomon for keeping a Feast of seven days for the Dedication of the Altar? or what Hezekiah for continuing the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days longer than the time appointed by the law? or what Mordecai and Esther for making an ordinance for the yearly observation of the Feast of Purim? or what lastly, Judas and the Maccabees for ordaining the Feast of the Dedication of the Altar to be kept from year to year at a set season for eight days together, which solemnity continued even in the days of Christ, and seemeth to have been by Him approved in the Gospel; the building of synagogues in their towns; the wearing of sackcloth and ashes in token of humiliation; the four fasts mentioned in Zech. viii., whereof one only was commanded . . . . instances enough, and frequent enough, to manifest how very much our brethren deceive themselves by resting upon so unsound a principle—and that upon a mere mistake!"* On the word *mystery* he founds a masterly argument against the superstitious terror of superstition which would abolish every *word* or *term* which may have been associated with error.† His love of clearness

* Preface, pp. 81, 82.

† *Ad Aulam*, the Ninth Sermon, p. 181.

and precision in moral and theological teaching does not narrow his perception of the infinite reaches of Heaven that lie beyond the track by which he advises men to walk. "A marvellous *great mystery*, in the search whereof Reason, finding itself at a loss, is forced to give it over in the plain field, and to cry out, 'O *Altitudo!*' as being unable to reach the unfathomable depth thereof. We believe and know, and that with fulness of assurance, that all these things are so, as they are revealed in Holy Scriptures . . . . and our own reason upon this ground teacheth us to submit ourselves and it to the obedience of faith, for the τὸ ὅτε that so it is. But for the τὸ πῶς; (Nicodemus's question, *How can these things be?*) it is no more possible for our weak understanding to comprehend that, than it is for the eyes of bats or owls to look steadfastly upon the body of the sun, when he shineth forth in his strength. The very angels, those holy and heavenly spirits, have *a* desire, saith St. Peter (it is but a *desire*, not any perfect *ability*, and that but παρακύψαι neither) to *peep* a little into those incomprehensible mysteries, and then cover their faces with their wings, and peep again, and cover again; as not being able to endure the fulness of that glorious lustre that shineth therein. We may as well think to grasp the earth in our fists, or to empty the sea with a pitcher, as to comprehend

these heavenly mysteries within our narrow understanding. *Puteus altus:* the well is deep, and our buckets (for want of cordage) will not reach near the bottom."*

V.

I do not desire to direct your attention to Sanderson as a Preacher mainly because his style is strong and pungent—or even because of the objective value of his teaching as a true director of conscience, and a powerful champion of the Church of England. The day comes for every Preacher (with few exceptions)—even for a great preacher it comes not rarely in his own life-time—when people call for the things which he has said to be said in another way. But the *spirit* in which the Preacher has spoken; the principles for which he has thought and toiled,—these outlast the mutations of fashion, and supply us with a lesson which will not pass away.

What have we to learn from Sanderson's teachings? These *three* things mainly.

1. In our desire to *interest* our hearers, to *stimulate* the religious instincts and sentiments, it is, I fear, questionable whether we supply them with—perhaps, whether we possess ourselves—a sufficient basis of fixed principles to direct and inform the conscience or give the mind stability in the present shock of contending speculations.

* *Ad Aulam*, the Ninth Sermon, p. 481.

I am about to borrow my illustration from the case of a celebrated woman who was brought up in a foreign country, and in the Church of Rome—but it may serve to point my lesson in a less offensive form.

The person to whom I refer was the inmate of a convent school in the first year of dawning womanhood. Her instructresses were ladies of undeniable earnestness. At first the girl rebelled against the severity of the place, and turned its devotions into ridicule. One day, tired of some forbidden frolic, she took up a book of pious edification, and turned over its leaves for half an hour which the pupils were supposed to pass in meditation. Some secret fibre in her heart began to vibrate to an unknown touch. She paused in her reading to gaze occasionally upon a picture of the Saviour's agony in Gethsemane. She began to ask herself the purpose of that bitter Passion, and to think, with tears, of the Divine self-sacrifice of the Son of God. On the same evening the girl went to church during an hour of private devotion. Her pride made the excuse to herself that she was going for the purpose of giving a ludicrous description of the attitudes of those who were engaged in prayer. But the whole scene and aspect of the place had an awful charm for her. The side door was open in the burning summer night; the scents of jasmine and wallflower floated in. The small church was

lighted by only one silver lamp, whose white flame was mirrored on the polished white marble pavement like a star in an unstirred pool. "I felt," she wrote in after years, "that Faith had taken possession of my soul. I was so grateful, so delighted, that a torrent of tears rolled over my face. I *felt* that I loved my God—that my thought embraced and accepted unreservedly that Ideal of justice, goodness, and holiness which I had never doubted, but with which I had never before found myself in direct living communion. I felt this communication *suddenly* established, as if an invisible barrier had been removed between the centre of infinite warmth and the feeble fire in my soul."

Such is the story of a conversion, evidently written with unfeigned emotion, and to which, in its essential features at least, many would attach infinite weight. But the narrator of that story is the woman of stormy and sinister genius—whose works are a defiance of the moral law not less than of the Gospel—the woman known to Europe by the name of George Sand!

And what seems to have been one cause at least of the change wrought in convictions once so full of promise? Christian morality, as she knew it, seems not to have been a definite law drawn from an inspired standard grasped by an enlightened intellect and self-applied to an enlightened conscience; not this, but a vague yearning supplemented by the direc-

tion of a *man* which must soon have ceased to hold that powerful understanding—the feline subtlety of that sceptical sarcasm, the tiger spring of those tremendous passions. With all her vast acquirements, the very elements of Christian theology, the very first article of the common creed of Christianity, seem to have been unknown to her beyond the letter. Her language, which is of extraordinary precision in rendering visible the subtlest shades of feeling and character, becomes fluctuating and contradictory when she would speak of dogma—a contradiction which existed in her thoughts. "I have need of God," was her frequent and pathetic cry. But as to who this God is, she contradicts herself. Sometimes she confounds His existence with that of nature. Sometimes she cries to Him as life. Sometimes she speaks as if she scorned and hated the Christian conception of the God who sees us and hears us. Sometimes again she shrinks from the impassible silence and glacial equity of a philosophic God. "I shall die," she cries, "in the thick cloud which envelopes and oppresses me. I have only torn it through at moments; and in hours, not of study, but of inspiration, I have perceived the Divine Ideal, as astronomers perceive the body of the sun athwart the fiery fluids which veil it with their impetuous action, and only remove to look it in again. But this is enough, perhaps, not for general truth, but for truth as I want it . . . . it is

enough to make me love this God that I feel Him behind the glitterings of the unknown, enough to make me throw at random into His mysterious infinitude the aspiration after the Infinite which He has lodged in me, and which is an emanation from Himself." * After quoting a letter addressed by her to her son in a domestic bereavement, a French reviewer adds: "The very fragment from which I extract these lines is one of those when her thoughts seem to have floated most uncertainly between contradictory affirmatives." †

I do not think that it is difficult to trace the connection between that which I have just said of Madame Dudevant, and the lesson which I wish to draw from the spirit of Bishop Sanderson. We want Sanderson's grave, manly, clear teaching upon *conscience*, its law and objects, addressed to men and women, unchanged in substance, in another form, and with more vivid illustrations. It may save many from the shipwreck which is sure to be undergone by indefinite sentiment. It may save some from the perilous craving for perpetual personal direction by a self-selected spiritual guide.

2. On the vexed subject of ceremonialism, the good old Bishop of Lincoln, "being dead, yet speaketh." He has written on that matter sen-

* 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' 1er mars 1878, p. 31. Par M. Othenin d'Haussonville.

† Ibid., pp. 32, 33.

tences as clear and weighty as any in the English language. "I say, first, that we have indeed no higher or other esteem of *ceremonies* than as of *indifferent things;* yet we do not think them *trifles*, otherwise than as in comparison with *necessary duties*. But let ceremonies (*secondly*) be as very trifles as any man can imagine them to be, yet obedience sure is no *trifle*. They mis-state the question when they talk of pressing *ceremonies*. It is *obedience* (generally) that is required; *ceremonies* not otherwise pressed than as the *matter* wherein that obedience is to be exercised. . . . That which is said of some men's *doting* so extremely on ceremonies might have been well enough spared. I know no true son of the Church of England that doteth upon any ceremony, whatsoever opinion he may have of the decency or expediency of some of them. If any do, let him answer for himself. Among wise men, he will hardly pass for a wise man that doteth upon any. Nor will he, I doubt, prove a much wiser man that runs into the contrary extreme, and abhorreth all." *

This is the principle of common-sense upon which the Church of England was defended by one of her theological giants against a morbid anti-ceremonialism. It is not my fault if, as I read these lines, they sound equally strong against a morbid ceremo-

* Preface, p. 70.

nialism. Disobedience may consist in doing too much as well as doing too little.

3. The *last* lesson which I draw from the spirit of Sanderson's teaching is that of *quietness*.

(*a*) *Quietness* in our tone of preaching—in our form of doctrine.

The Church's view—as given in every page by this her judicious Preacher—is that the spiritual life is intended to be a thing of orderly development. Sanderson's writings are based upon the truth that *conscience, principle, duty,* are more than feelings, or frames, or emotions. The Church is the home and channel of the Eternal Personal Spirit. A Divine Living Person is ever with and in the Church, working through recognised means—the Word and Sacraments. An uncertain, precarious influence has no permanent home; an impersonal power has no reflective continuity of action. Law in its highest form is the expression of the highest form of personality. These are days when earnest men are apt to be carried away by experiments in Revivalism, and other things of which our old bishops and divines were very jealous. Those who think with him who was pastor of Boothby Pannell for forty years, will gauge the spiritual health of their parishes by their normal temperature, not by their fever-heat.

(*b*) *Quietness in ourselves* is another lesson which breathes from Sanderson's life and pulpit. Those who read of the good bishop's extreme bashfulness,

and diffidence in speech, may regret and even censure it. Yet one is sometimes tempted to cry, "O for less talk, less fuss, less hurry! O for more of the great silent men who lived mainly under the shadow of their church-yard trees, and among humble homes by the side of parish lanes—who did not strive, nor cry, nor were their voices heard in the streets! O for less of average fluency and plausible facility—less readiness to run off a speech or a sermon! More study, more knowledge, more thought!" At all events we turn from our high pressure and multitudinous sermons and speeches to those saintly souls with their noble quiet, their shy and thoughtful tenderness.

I venture to say one word of deeper import yet, referring to our motto-text. To the scribes of old, Jabez was a shape melting in the mists of history. Ours stands before us, so far as we are true Gospel scribes, the Man of Sorrows, whose mother's soul was pierced—more honourable than his brethren—who had the breadths of the earth given to Him—who planted families of scribes, for "He gave some Apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry." O that with these holy men of old we could draw near to Him of the pierced hand who has the secrets of wisdom and knowledge! O that we could learn to speak to the spirit of the age as they did! O that

the prayer of Jabez was ours! For that which he prayed for was not wealth or power, strong city, or fertile field. The teacher and scribe prayed that God's Word might grow, and God granted his request.

TILLOTSON,

THE PRACTICAL PREACHER.

"Let your moderation be known unto all men."—*Phil.* iv. 5.

Moderation exemplified in Tillotson's life and preaching—His name marks an epoch in the history of the English pulpit—Born in 1630—His life at Cambridge—Scene at Whitehall—Appointed Preacher at Lincoln's Inn and St. Lawrence Jewry—Popularity of his sermons—Testimony of Voltaire—His many friendships—Appointed Archbishop—Promotes measures for comprehension of Dissenters—Reputed a Latitudinarian; but himself definite in his dogmatic teaching, though tolerant of those who differed from him—Accused of hypocrisy, Socinianism, &c.; his meekness under these attacks—Extracts from his private note-book—His death, 1694—His character, according to Burnet, Waterland, and Neal.

The Westminster Directory on the faults of contemporary preaching—Tillotson's style becomes the model to his own and the next generation; severely criticised by M. Taine.

His Sermon on "The Wisdom of being Religious": an early production, but a good example of his style—Argumentative rather than persuasive; wanting in poetry and emotion; always sensible and practical; sometimes suggestive of deeper thoughts—Sermons on Future Punishment, on Popery—Extracts from the course of Sermons on Religious Education—Conclusion.

I KNOW of no text which may more fittingly be connected with the name of Archbishop Tillotson than this, which was applied to him soon after his death by one of his friends. The many qualities

which are implied in the one word "moderation,"* the gentleness, the equanimity, the forbearance, the reasonableness, the avoidance of extremes, the readiness to concede in things not essential, were all conspicuous in his character: and when he preached, he was not untrue to himself. His sermons, as well as his life, made his moderation known unto all men.

The virtue of which he was himself a signal example he commended in words which have not yet lost their force. "Moderation," he says, "has of late been declaimed against, as if it were not only no virtue, but even the sum and abridgment of all vices. I still hold that it is a virtue, and one of the peculiar ornaments and advantages of the excellent constitutions of our Church; and it must at last be the temper of her members, especially of the clergy, if ever we seriously intend the firm establishment of the Church, and do not industriously design, by cherishing heats and divisions among ourselves, to let in Popery at these breaches." †

Besides the particular danger which was always present to the mind of the good Archbishop, there are others, I need not say, of at least equal urgency at the present day, which impress upon us counsels of moderation together with motives for zeal.

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* τὸ ἐπιεικές.

† Preface to 'Sermons of Bishop Wilkins.'

It concerns us not now to inquire what claim Archbishop Tillotson may have to rank among the "Classic Preachers of the Church." The latest edition of his works, published in 1752, in three goodly folio volumes, attests the survival of his reputation for more than half a century after his death. But when Dr. Johnson was asked, in 1778, what sermons he would recommend as a model of style, he said as to Tillotson, "I should not advise a preacher to imitate him; though," he added, "I should be cautious of objecting to what has been applauded by so many suffrages." Still the name of Tillotson marks an epoch in the history of English preaching. To him, more perhaps than to any one, it is due that preaching became in the best sense of the word, *popular;* that it was purged of the verbal conceits which, however ingenious, were unworthy of the sacred subjects with which they were associated; and that instead of being elaborate displays of academical learning, sermons were composed in a simple, natural style, and by force of plain reasoning and plain speaking went home to every man's understanding and conscience.

The preacher does not address himself to students in the closet, nor to a distant posterity, but endeavours to persuade those who hear him: by his power in moving his hearers, so far as that power is apparent to the eye of man, his success as a preacher is to be measured. To Tillotson, judged by this standard,

the very highest place must be awarded. He was peculiarly fitted, both by natural disposition and by early training, to be the spiritual leader of the age in which he lived—an age weary of strife, and not unlikely from mere weariness to abandon itself to indifference or unbelief, unless it were led by a firm yet gentle hand into the ways of pleasantness and peace. Such guidance, as we believe, was given, and not given in vain, by Tillotson. Bishop Burnet, no mean authority on this point, has said of him that "more than any one he brought the city (London) to love our worship."

Born in 1630, and dying in 1694, he lived through the most troubled and most eventful period that has passed in our national history since the Reformation.* He was the son of a respectable Yorkshire clothier, and having been brought up by his father in the strictest sect of Calvinism, he had much to unlearn as well as to learn when at the age of seventeen he became a student at Clare Hall, in the University of Cambridge. There he was noted as "a good scholar, an acute logician and philosopher, a quick disputant, and possessed of a solid judgment." It is related of him by one who

* My chief authorities for the life of Tillotson are the excellent biography by Dr. Birch, and the anonymous memoir appended thereto; and Burnet's works, especially the 'History of his own Times.'

was under his tuition at college, that he always, except on Sundays, conversed with his pupils in Latin; that when they came to him every evening in his chamber for prayer, he required them to render a portion of the Greek Testament into Latin; that he carefully watched over their behaviour and manners, had a true love for those who were well conducted, and dealt severely with offenders. He prayed much in secret in his bedchamber, using his voice in his prayers, but so that none could hear him, "except myself," says the narrator, "who slept just over him." "He was an attentive hearer of sermons, of which in that time there was both great and good store, and he generally heard four every Lord's day. He was of a good wit, sharp and acute, facetious and pleasant, but with decorum and gravity above his years. He had a sweet nature, friendly and obliging, not sour or sullen, not proud or haughty; he had a mighty respect paid him in London, where his company and conversation were highly valued."

During his residence at Cambridge, he conceived a dislike for the principles of Puritanism, to which, as they were then in the ascendant, his worldly interest might have inclined him to adhere; and if any impulse from without was needed to turn his religious sympathies in another direction, it may have been given him at the memorable scene of which he was an eyewitness, in the palace of Whitehall, within a

week after the death of Oliver Cromwell. We have it from the pen of Bishop Burnet, to whom it was related by Tillotson himself. "It was a fast-day; and going into the presence chamber, where the solemnity was being kept, he saw there the new Protector and his family on one side of a table, and six preachers on the other, by whom God was in a manner reproached with the deceased Protector's services, and challenged for taking him away so soon. One of them had assured them in a prayer, a very few minutes before the Protector expired, that he was not to die; and now he had the assurance to say to God, 'Thou hast deceived us, and we are deceived.' Another, praying for Richard, used these words: 'Make him the brightness of the father's glory, and the express image of his person.'" Ten years afterwards the young man who heard these blasphemies married the niece of him who was the subject of them, the daughter of Bishop Wilkins, whose wife was Cromwell's sister.

Having been ordained in a somewhat irregular manner by a Scotch bishop resident in London, Tillotson, in 1661–62, served the curacy of Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire; and it is related, as a proof of the influence which he acquired at an early age, that while he was at Cheshunt he prevailed on an old Oliverian soldier, who preached to the Anabaptists in his red coat, and had a great following, to desist from his incongruous occupation. He was often in-

vited to preach in London; and he made such use of these opportunities that in 1662 he was appointed to the Tuesday Lectureship at St. Lawrence Jewry, and in the following year to the preachership at Lincoln's Inn.

From this time he continued for thirty years to fill two of the most prominent and important posts which were open to a preacher of the seventeenth century. At Lincoln's Inn he addressed a forensic audience, not easily beguiled by scholastic subtleties or unreal sentiment. At St. Lawrence Jewry he had for his hearers the merchants and clergy of London; the clergy repairing to his church, as we are told, "to learn of him and form their mind." In this double capacity he gained such a name among his contemporaries as no preacher since the Reformation, not even Andrewes or Jeremy Taylor, had acquired before him. His Sermons were published, and widely circulated both at home and abroad, and obtained a Continental reputation which has been accorded to few if to any other productions of the English pulpit, being translated into the German and the Dutch languages, and into French by several hands, especially by Barbeyrac in 1708, and by Beausobre as late as 1728. Voltaire styles him "the wisest and most eloquent of European preachers"; and speaking of Massillon, whom alone of his own countrymen he puts in comparison with him, he says, "How far, in the judgment of all Europe, is Massillon inferior to

Tillotson!" * How completely, we may now say, has the judgment of posterity reversed that of the age of Voltaire!

Following the practice which established itself in the English Church in spite of strong remonstrances from the king, he neither preached *extempore*, nor committed his sermons to memory. Having once attempted to preach without book and failed, he never repeated the experiment. The same was the case with Sanderson, notwithstanding his extraordinary memory.†

His personal character must have done much to enforce his teaching. It is no slight testimony to his real goodness as well as to his social qualities, that, without any advantages of birth or fortune, he attached to himself friends so distinguished in their various walks of life as Isaac Barrow, who committed

* 'Works,' vol. xxvii. p. 289: "Tillotson, le plus sage et le plus éloquent prédicateur de l'Europe, a dit, 'All sects are commonly most hot and furious for those things for which there is least reason'" (Sermon 6. As to Massillon, see 'Works,' vol. v. p. 3.

† King Charles II., in 1671, directed the Duke of Monmouth, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, to write to the University, rebuking the preachers for wearing long hair, and reading their sermons; and enjoining them to wear their hair in a manner more suitable to the gravity of their profession, and "to lay aside the present supine and slothful way of preaching, which took beginning with the disorders of the late times, and to deliver their sermons, both Latin and English, by memory or without book, as being a way of preaching which his Majesty judgeth most agreeable to the custom of all foreign churches" (Cooper, 'Annals of Cambridge,' vol. iii. p. 564). Of Sanderson (about A.D. 1618) an amusing anecdote is related in Isaac Walton's biography.

to him the laborious office of editing his works; Robert Nelson, the most illustrious layman among the Nonjurors; Bishop Wilkins, one of the originators of the Royal Society; the learned Stillingfleet; Burnet, one of the greatest of our Bishops; John Locke, the chief of English philosophers, who consulted him on his theological doubts; Halley the astronomer, with whom he had a correspondence respecting the comet of which Halley was the discoverer; Sir Matthew Hale, who submitted to his judgment an essay in defence of the Mosaic record of the Creation and the Deluge; Lord William Russell, whom he attended in prison and on the scaffold; Lady William Russell, with whom he was in frequent communication during her widowhood, now advising her, and now seeking her advice; and, lastly, King William III., a man usually cold in speech, though of warm feelings, who said of him, "He was the best man I ever knew, and the best friend I ever had."

After holding successively the deaneries of Canterbury (1672) and St. Paul's (1689), he received the highest, but to him the most unwelcome, proof of the king's regard in 1691, when he was appointed successor to Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury. Having long resisted the king's wishes, he yielded at last to the expostulations of Lady William Russell, rendered doubly persuasive by the graceful sympathy which she blended with them. In accepting

the office, he prayed their Majesties (William and Mary) to dismiss him from it as soon as the state of their affairs would enable them to do so; and he charged his more intimate friends to tell him, if they observed him, from the infirmities of age, becoming unequal to his duties, that he might retire in good time. This circumstance, made known after his death by Bishop Burnet,* may have suggested to a nearly contemporary French writer the incident, so true to human nature, which he connected with an imaginary archbishop, in one of his most popular works of fiction.†

It was impossible for one in Tillotson's position to stand aloof from the ecclesiastical controversies which preceded and followed the great political crisis of the Revolution. He favoured a scheme sagaciously set on foot by Archbishop Sancroft for the comprehension of Dissenters, and himself proposed alterations in the Liturgy which might be made with this object. But to his honour be it remembered that he dissuaded William III. from the project of carrying through Parliament an act for the union of Protestants, without the consent of the Convocation of the clergy; saying that a scheme approved by the latter body would not only be

* See his funeral sermon on Tillotson.

† Le Sage, born 1668; 'Gil Blas' was written about 1708.

more acceptable to the clergy, but would be more religiously observed by the laity. He also suggested that a royal commission should be issued to some of the most eminent of the clergy, to devise means for healing the wounds of the Church; that what they should agree upon, after receiving the sanction of Convocation, might be ratified by Parliament. I need not relate the consequences of that advice; how it led to the appointment of the Royal Commission of 1689, and the assembling of Convocation after an interval of nearly half a century; and how the proceedings of those bodies, terminating in discord, and tending to widen the breach which they should have healed, became a sorrowful but instructive chapter in our Church's history.

Mild by nature, tolerant of religious differences, as became one who did not forget "the hole of the pit," the Puritanism, from which he had been digged, Tillotson was disposed to put a liberal construction on creeds and formularies. Bishop Burnet includes him, together with Stillingfleet and Patrick, in the School of Whichcot and Cudworth, on whom the name of Latitudinarians was fastened, as he says, by men of narrow thoughts and tempers. But there was no want of definiteness in Tillotson's dogmatic teaching. His ordinary sermons on the main articles of the faith are unexceptionable in their orthodoxy; those which he preached on the Divinity of our Lord are uncompromising in their

maintenance of the Catholic faith against the tenets of Arius and Socinus. It has been said by the historian of the literature of Europe, that Tillotson "in almost all his sermons asserts the principles of natural religion and morality, not only as the basis of all revelation, without a dependence on which it cannot be believed, but as nearly coincident with Christianity in extent.* I cannot but think, however, that Mr. Hallam would have been led to qualify this statement by a perusal of the Sermons which treat of sanctification, the "work of the Spirit," and goodness, righteousness, and truth, the "fruits of the Spirit." It may be true that in the general tenor of his preaching the practical element preponderates over the doctrinal, both in the fulness with which it is developed and in the earnestness with which it is enforced. But that which in Tillotson is an occasional and scarcely obvious disproportion, in his successors has the appearance of a significant and systematic suppression. The preachers of the eighteenth century, while they enlarged on the moral duties which are inculcated alike by Christianity and by natural religion, were cold and sparing in their expositions of the distinctive doctrines of the gospel. The tendency to minimise dogma unhappily prevailed more and more. But God was ever watching over his Church; under the teaching of the Wesleys and

* Hallam, 'History of Literature,' vol. ii. p. 297 (8vo. ed.).

their followers a new era was commenced; and the evangelical truths which had been well-nigh lost sight of were impressed on men's minds with such fervid reiteration as threatened to throw into the shade the no less essential moralities which had lately been brought into undue prominence.*

Tillotson incurred a full share of the obloquy which they who enter upon polemics must expect to earn as a part, and sometimes as the whole, of their earthly reward. Things were laid to his charge which he never knew; false doctrines were attributed to him of which he had been the able and determined, though fair and candid opponent. He was accused of excessive tenderness to Dissenters, of time-serving, of hypocrisy, of atheism. These imputations he bore meekly, and it may be said of him as truly as it has been said of his great scientific contemporary,† the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, that "since controversy existed, there never was a man who took the trouble to defend himself so little, or who when he did defend himself spoke with such altogether angelic sweetness." Soon after he became Archbishop a packet was sent to him containing a mask. He threw it care-

* See on this subject Lecky, 'History of the 18th Century,' vol. i. p. 84.

† Harvey, born 1578, died 1658. The above words were said of Harvey at the tercentenary festival held in his honour in June 1878, the speaker being Professor Huxley.

lessly on the table, and turning to a friend observed that "this was a mild rebuke compared with others that lay there in black and white." When proceedings were commenced against his calumniators by the law officers of the crown, he interceded for them, that the prosecutions might be dropped. Once only did he reply to them; it was when he was charged with a leaning to Socinianism;* and then his reply consisted in publishing a course of sermons which he had preached several years before on the Divinity of Christ, and which were especially directed against the arguments of the Socinians. And his offence appears to have consisted in his having said, with a candour characteristic of himself rather than of his times, that the Socinians were "fair disputants, arguing clearly, with dexterity and caution, and yet with smartness and subtlety, and that they had but one great defect, the want of a good cause and truth on their side." †

Towards the close of his life he did a good service to posterity by inducing Bishop Burnet to write his exposition of the 39 Articles, which has continued down to our own time to be a text-book for students preparing for holy orders. Shortly before his death he had the satisfaction of receiving the work from the author in MS., and returning it to him with

* "A charge of the most unbounded description," says Lathbury, 'History of the Non-jurors,' p. 157.

† 'Sermons,' vol. i. p. 422.

corrections, and with a letter conveying his favourable judgment of it.*

We have seen what he was before the world and in intercourse with friends. But we know something also of the secret thoughts and hidden life of this man who was said to wear a mask. He had not been many months Archbishop before he found his aversion to the office confirmed by his experience of it; and he entered in shorthand in his note-book reflections which, being intended for no eye but his own, may be accepted without a doubt as to their sincerity. In one of these

* Birch's 'Life of Tillotson,' p. 95; Burnet on the 39 Articles (Preface). The letter is as follows:—

"My Lord,

"I have with great pleasure and satisfaction read over the great volume you sent me, and am astonished to see so vast a work begun and finished in so short a time. In the article of the Trinity you have said all that I think can be said upon so obscure and difficult an argument. The Socinians have just now published an answer to us all; but I have not had a sight of it. The negative articles against the Church of Rome you have very fully explained, and with great learning and judgment: concerning these you will meet with no opposition amongst ourselves. The greatest danger was to be apprehended from the points in difference between the Calvinists and the Remonstrants, in which you have shown not only great skill and moderation, but great prudence in contenting yourself to represent both sides impartially, without any positive declaration of your own judgment. The account given of Athanasius's Creed seems to me no wise satisfactory. I wish we were well rid of it. I pray God long to preserve your Lordship to do more such services to the Church.—I am, my Lord, yours most affectionately, Jo. Cant."

he gives expression to feelings which have probably been entertained by many besides himself.

"One would be apt to wonder," he says, "that Nehemiah (v. 16) should reckon a huge bill of fare and a vast number of promiscuous guests amongst his virtues and good deeds, for which he asks God to remember him. But upon better consideration, besides the bounty, and sometimes charity, of a great table, provided there be nothing of vanity or ostentation in it, there may be exercised two very considerable virtues; one is temperance, and the other self-denial, in a man's being contented for the sake of the public to deny himself so much as to sit down every day to a feast, and to eat continually in a crowd, and almost never to be alone, especially when, as it often happens, a great part of the company that a man *must* have is the company that a man *would not* have. I doubt it will prove but a melancholy business, when a man comes to die, to have made a great noise and bustle in the world, and to have been known far and near, but all this while to have been hid and concealed from himself. It is a very odd and fantastical sort of life for a man to be continually from home, and most of all a stranger in his own house.

"It is surely an uneasy thing to sit always in a frame, and to be perpetually on a man's guard; not to be able to speak a careless word, or to use a negligent posture, without observation and censure.

"Nothing but necessity, or the hope of doing more good than a man is capable of doing in a private station (which a modest man will not easily presume concerning himself) can recompense the trouble and uneasiness of a more public and busy life.

"The capacity and opportunity of doing greater good is the specious pretence under which ambition is wont to cover the eager desire of power and greatness.

"If it be said, which is the most spiteful thing that can be said, that some ambition is necessary to vindicate a man from being a fool: to this I think it may fairly be answered, that there may perhaps be as much ambition in declining greatness as in courting it, only it is of a more unusual kind, and the example of it less dangerous, because it is not like to be contagious."

After holding the archbishopric for three years, he received his dismissal from it, not through the indulgence of the king nor the officiousness of friends, but by the sudden yet not unexpected hand of death. It then appeared that notwithstanding the wealthy preferments which he held, his liberality and charity had kept him poor. He left nothing to his family but the copyright of his sermons:* and Robert Nelson, in whose arms he expired, mindful

* This was sold for 2500 guineas.

of the friendship which he had maintained with the Archbishop and grateful for the advice which he had received from him during six-and-twenty years, obtained an augmentation of the pension which was assigned to his widow by the king.

Bishop Burnet, speaking of Tillotson, in the 'History of his own Times,' says of him: "I preached his funeral sermon, in which I gave him a character so severely true that I kept perhaps too much within bounds, and said less than he deserved. But we had lived in such friendship together, that I thought it was more decent, as it was more safe, to err on that head. He was the man of the truest judgment and best temper I had ever known. He had a clear head, with a most tender and compassionate heart; he was a faithful and zealous friend, but a gentle and soon-conquered enemy. He was truly and seriously religious, but without affectation, bigotry, or superstition. His notions of morality were fine and sublime; his thread of reasoning was easy, clear, and solid. He was not only the best preacher of his age, but seemed to have brought preaching to perfection; his sermons were so well heard and liked, and so much read, that all the nation proposed him for a pattern, and studied to copy after him. His parts remained with him clear and unclouded; but the perpetual slander and other ill-usage which had followed him for many years, especially since his advancement to that great post,

gave him too deep a concern. It could neither provoke him nor fright him from his duty. But it affected his mind so much, that this was thought to have shortened his days."

These are the words of one who knew and loved him. How he was regarded in the next generation may be gathered from the works of two divines differing from him, and still more from each other, in their theology. Dr. Waterland, the high churchman, recommends * his Sermons to young students, and, while controverting his opinions, cites him as "that great and good prelate." Neal, the Nonconformist, in his 'History of the Puritans,' describes him as "a second Cranmer, one of the most valuable prelates that this or, it may be, any other Church ever produced." †

I have said that his Sermons mark an epoch in the history of English preaching. That epoch had its dawn as far back as the year 1644, when the Westminster Assembly of divines in their directory protested against the pedantic style which had become fashionable in the reign of James I. They said that, what with the multiplicity of divisions, the technical phrases, the long involved sentences, and the profusion of Greek and Latin quotations, the sermon had become a wearisome display of the

* Vol. ii. p. 134. † Neal, Hist. vol. iv. p. 429.

preacher's acquirements, beyond the intelligence of ordinary hearers, and not calculated to impress them with the vital importance of the truths which were overlaid with so much ponderous erudition. The preacher was enjoined "to perform his whole ministry plainly, that the meanest may understand; abstaining from an unprofitable use of unknown tongues, strange phrases, and cadences of sounds and words; sparing to cite sentences of ecclesiastical and other human writers, ancient or modern, be they never so elegant" (*i.e.* well chosen). It was not to be expected that even good advice, proceeding from such a quarter, would have an immediate effect on the episcopal clergy; nor was it quickly followed even by the Presbyterians. But by degrees an entire change took place in the style of preaching: and John Evelyn, the friend and admirer of Jeremy Taylor, and for his time the best example of a cultivated layman of the Church, records in his Diary, in the year 1683, that he "heard a stranger, an old man, preach after Bishop Andrewes's method, full of logical divisions, in short and broken periods and Latin sentences, now quite out of fashion in the pulpit, which is grown into a far more profitable way of plain and practical discourses." *

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* See Jackson's 'Life of Farindon,' p. 75, ed. 1849; Evelyn's 'Memoirs,' vol. iii. p. 90; and Bp. Burnet, 'Pastoral Care,' chap. ix.: "Preaching is brought of late to a much greater perfection than it was ever before at among us. It is certainly brought nearer

Tillotson set himself from the first to acquire a simple manner of preaching, and his success cannot be better described than in the words of his biographer, who says that "his hearers never tired of him." Not only did he become a model of imitation to the clergy, but his easy, flowing style exercised a lasting influence even on secular literature. Charles II., who, during his residence in France, had gained some little culture and taste, is said to have valued Tillotson highly on this account, though for other reasons he disliked him. His sermons were the admiration of the age of Queen Anne, and they did much to promote the change by which English prose has freed itself from the rugged and lengthy periods which weary the eye even in the pages of Milton and Jeremy Taylor, and has been cast into the terse melodious style which is found in our best modern writers. Dryden is said to have attributed whatever merit he possessed as a prose writer to his frequent perusal of the works of Tillotson. Addison considered them the best standard of English to which he could refer when

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the pattern that St. Chrysostom has set, or perhaps carried beyond it. Our language is much refined, and we have returned to the plain notions of simple and genuine rhetoric. The impertinent way of dividing texts is laid aside, the needless setting out of the originals and the vulgar version is worn off; the trifling show of learning in many quotations of passages that very few could understand do no more flat the auditory. Pert wit and luscious eloquence have lost their relish," &c.

he was preparing a dictionary of our language; and in the 'Spectator' (No. 557) he styles Tillotson "the great English preacher."

I have spoken of the testimony which Voltaire has given to his fame. Very recently a living ornament of French literature, and an able historian of our own, has taken Tillotson as a representative of the English preaching of his age. M. Taine pronounces him "an academical pedant, alike devoid of imagination, wit, and originality, who stifles the impassioned word of Scripture with his tedious arguments and explanations." He finds in him two only of the graces of eloquence, the two most requisite, as he says, in that rude period of English civilisation (may we not say the most requisite in every period?), namely, good sense and sincerity. "One who speaks as he does compels men to say, 'We must do as he tells us.' Such a discourse excites no admiration, gives no pleasure, but fulfils the true purpose of a sermon: it convinces, it constrains, it is practical." And thus he dismisses the great preachers of the time whom he summons before his tribunal: "If Barrow is redundant, Tillotson heavy, South trivial, the rest not readable, they are all convincing: their sermons are not models of eloquence, but means of edification; their glory is not in their books, but in their works." *

* Taine, 'Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise,' vol. iii. p. 287.

The criticism, though overstrained, both in its censure and in its praise, is worthy of notice, as the judgment of a brilliant French writer who has been at the pains to acquire something more than a superficial acquaintance with the works of our old divines.

The sermon which first brought Tillotson into note, entitled "The wisdom of being religious," was preached before the Lord Mayor and corporation at St. Paul's in 1664. Being the work of a young man, and composed for a special occasion, it is naturally more "academical" than his later discourses; yet it has many points in common with them. It has the divided and subdivided argument, and the steady good sense which keeps safely on level ground, without venturing into the regions of poetry or rhetoric. It makes no impassioned appeal to the conscience, causes no deep searchings of spirit, never moves the heart by any touch of pathos or sympathy, derives no illustrations from nature. It has that kind of wit which consists in pointed sayings, and aphorisms, and in a certain humorous bluntness. Among the profane authors quoted in it are Aristotle, Cicero, Ennius, Lucretius, Juvenal, Strabo, Maximus Tyrius. It always keeps in view the proposition which is to be proved, and which when proved is to be acted upon as the rule of life. We find in it thoughts thrown out as it

were carelessly by the way, which others have taken up and wrought into a scientific form. Thus, when he says that, "even if the arguments for and against the being of a God were equal, yet the hazard is so infinitely unequal, that *in point of prudence and interest every one would be obliged* to incline to the affirmative," he uses an argument which is adopted, together with some of the very words in which he expresses it, by Bishop Butler in the Introduction to his 'Analogy.' "If," says Butler, "the result of examination be that there appears upon the whole any the lowest presumption on one side, and none on the other, or a greater presumption on one side, though in the lowest degree greater, this in matters of practice will lay us under an absolute and formal *obligation, in point of prudence and interest*, to act upon that presumption or low probability."*

Again, when he says, "The scepticism of the age requires proof of things that cannot be made plainer," he says in simple language what has been expressed in a logical form by a great theologian of our time, though not now of our Church, who says, "Taking man as he is, we shall commonly find him dissatisfied with a demonstrative process from an undemonstrated premiss; and when he has once begun to reason he will seek to prove the point

* See also 'Analogy,' part 2, chap. 6.

from which the reasoning starts as well as that at which it arrives." *

The authority of Tillotson has been alleged in support of those milder opinions as to eternal punishment which have lately been gaining ground among us. But I am bound to say that in his teaching on this solemn subject he appears to me to keep strictly and even sternly to the old lines. In his sermon on "the eternity of hell torments," which was charged with unsoundness, he meets the objections which have been taken on the score of justice to the doctrine of a never-ending retribution: he cites and interprets in the usual way the passages of Scripture by which that doctrine appears to be supported, and notices none of those which have been urged against it. He refutes the notion of annihilation, whether immediate on death or ensuing after a period of retribution; and the only concession which he makes is this, that possibly the threatened punishment may not be inflicted, there being (as he puts it) no such breach of truth and faithfulness in the non-fulfilment of a threat as there would be in the non-fulfilment of a promise. But on this bare possibility he advises no one to depend; he lays no stress on it; he mentions it only to discredit and dismiss it; and we also may dismiss it with the remark, that a hope for which no better

* Newman, 'Historical Essays,' vol. ii. p. 176.

reason could be given would not be worthy to be called a hope.

If we were to follow the now forgotten controversies which were occasioned by his sermons on Infidelity, on the Incarnation, and on Transubstantiation, we should find abundant proofs in them that he was possessed of no mean abilities as a polemical divine. It was in confronting "Popery" that he was aroused to his greatest vivacity and vehemence of denunciation. For an example, we may turn to the sermon preached before the House of Commons in 1678, soon after the pretended discovery by Titus Oates of the "Popish Plot." Alarmed by the Romanising tendencies of the Court, the people were in that state of panic, at once suspicious and credulous, which precludes sober reasoning and calm investigation. Never was the moderation of the preacher exercised more skilfully. He falls in with the feeling that is abroad; but while encouraging it, he diverts it into a channel in which it may expend itself without mischief. He directs the indignation of Parliament chiefly against the persecuting spirit of "Popery." Taking for his text the saying of our Lord (Luke ix. 56), "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them," he inveighs against the Church of Rome for its persecuting spirit, so contrary to the teaching and example of Christ, and "to the generous humanity and Christ-

ian temper of English Protestants." He excuses his vehemence by saying that he has been transported beyond his usual temper by the occasion of the day (it was the 5th of November), and by the present circumstances; says he can truly apply to himself the words in which the Roman orator spoke of his own disposition, "My nature inclines me to be compassionate, my country bids me be severe; but neither my nature nor my country intended me to be cruel." "Let us," he says, "commit our cause to God; and under God leave it to the wisdom and care of his Majesty and his two houses of Parliament, to make a lasting provision for the security of our peace and religion against the secret contrivances and open attempts of these *sons of violence*." Thus the whole argument and drift of the sermon tended to allay the excitement and to stay the persecution which was rising against the Papists.

More effectual than measures of repression, as a safeguard against false doctrine, is the diligence which employs itself in imparting the truth. To set up such a barrier against Romanism was, it is said, the main purpose of the movement for founding charity schools which distinguished the latter part of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century.* A strong impulse must have

* Strype, in his edition of 'Stowe's London,' vol. i. p. 194, speaks of "those Sunday schools of charity, unknown to former

been given to that excellent work by the course of sermons 'On Religious Education' which Tillotson preached at St. Lawrence Jewry in 1684. Those practical discourses have for us far more interest than others in which he showed himself well able to cope with the infidel, the Socinian, or the Romanist. They enlarge upon common domestic duties, enforcing them with illustrations drawn from Scripture, from profane authors, and from the preacher's experience. They derive also an historical interest from the rebukes which they administer to the fashionable vices of the time.

Treating of domestic worship, he requires that in every household there should be daily prayer and the reading of the Bible (especially the Psalms and the New Testament); and "where this is neglected, he does not see how any family can be esteemed to be a family of Christians, or indeed to have any religion at all." As a guide to private devotion, he recommends the book which had appeared anonymously a few years before, and which is still in use, and still of uncertain authorship, 'The Whole Duty of Man.'

The custom of saying grace at meals he regards

times, set up of late, to the eternal credit and honour of the city, and to the entailing of the blessing of God upon it, by the pious good wills of many citizens, both for poor boys and girls, of which in and about London and Westminster there were in number 54, so long past as anno 1704." See also Maitland's 'History of London,' p. 1277.

as "a piece of Natural Religion, owned and practised in all ages and in most places of the world," but shamefully neglected in his time, especially at the most plentiful tables, and among those of the highest quality, "as if great persons were ashamed or thought scorn to own whence these blessings came."

The decay of piety in these and other things is due, he says, "in part to civil confusions and distractions, but chiefly to our differences in religion, which have not only divided and scattered our parochial congregations, but have entered likewise into our families and made grievous disturbance there."

Among "the special sins" of the age he mentions the neglect of the maternal duty of nursing the newborn infant; and, though well aware that "what he says may displease nice and delicate mothers, who prefer their own ease and pleasure to the fruit of their own bodies," yet whether they will hear or whether they will forbear, he must deal plainly with them; and, after reasoning with them at some length, he commends the unusual argument to posterity, being afraid that the world will never be much better till this great fault be mended.

Other improprieties, which he attributes to the unhappy confusions of the preceding age, are the private administration of baptism, to which the clergy consented out of compliance with the wishes

of their more powerful parishioners, who "for their ease or humour, or for the convenience of a pompous christening," would have their children baptised at home; and the disuse of both public and private catechising, a serious loss to young minds, which are, as he urges, especially open to this method of instruction by question and answer; and on this point he quotes with approval the observation that "Catechising and the history of the martyrs have been the two great pillars of Protestantism."

The young, he says, must be trained to *diligence*, without which, according to an old Latin saying, no one ever became great. "When the Roman historians describe an extraordinary man, this always enters into his character as an essential part of it, his 'incredible industry,' or his 'singular diligence,' or something to that purpose. And, indeed, a person can neither be excellently good nor extremely bad without this quality. The devil himself could not be so bad and mischievous as he is, if he were not so striving and restless a spirit, compassing the earth, and going to and fro seeking whom he may devour."

"Never let your children be without a calling, or without some useful or at least innocent employment; that they may not be put upon a kind of necessity of being vicious for want of something better to do.

"Keep them as much as possible out of the way of bloody and cruel sights; discountenance in them all

cruel and barbarous usage of creatures under their power; do not let them torture and kill them for their sport and pleasure; because this will by degrees harden their hearts, and make them less apt to compassionate the wants of the poor and the afflictions of the miserable.

"Accustom them to disappointment. Possess them with the baseness of telling a lie. Train them to be temperate in their diet; *Magna pars virtutis est bene moratus venter.* Teach them the general principles and rules of justice and righteousness. Rebuke them mildly. Whips are not "the cords of a man": but take care that your lenity be no encouragement to sin, like the cold reproof which old Eli gave his sons, which in the case of a crime so great and notorious was a kind of allowance of it. Check and discourage in them the first beginnings of sin. Vices, like ill weeds, grow apace; and if they once take to the soil, it will be hard to extirpate and kill them.

"Parents are apt to be strict in enforcing lesser things, while they neglect the weightier matters of the law. I have known some who have with great severity restrained their children in the wearing of their hair; nay, I can remember since the wearing of it below their ears was looked upon as a sin of the first magnitude; and when ministers generally, whatever their text was, did in every sermon either find or make occasion with great severity to reprove

the sin of long hair; and if they saw any one in the congregation guilty in that kind, they would point him out particularly, and let fly at him with great zeal." He notices the ill-effects of severity in causing children to know virtue only as a thing which, to be hated, needs but to be seen, in the words of Erasmus, *virtutem simul odisse et nosse;* and he cites the example of Xantippus, who caused the pictures of Joy and Gladness to be set round about his school, to signify that the business of education ought to be made pleasurable. Applying to his own purpose the saying of Augustus concerning Herod, that it was better to be his swine than his son, he says "it is better to be some men's dogs or hawks or horses than their children, for they take a greater care to breed and train up these to their several ends and uses than to breed up their children for eternal happiness."

It seems likely that some passages in Locke's treatise on education, and even the general conception of the work, may have been suggested by these discourses of Tillotson.*

In conclusion, let me say that if the Church, in the abundance of her homiletic stores, can afford to

* *Eg.* compare Locke, §§ 38 and 116, with Tillotson, Sermon 51, vol. i. p. 495. On the other hand, Lord King, in his 'Life of Locke' i. 230, considers that some remarks of the philosopher, dated Sunday, Sept. 18, 1681, "anticipate the argument in Archbishop Tillotson's celebrated discourse against Transubstantiation."

let the Sermons of Tillotson pass into oblivion, she must always have a grateful remembrance of the good work which he did for her, partly by means of these Sermons, in her needful time of trouble: nor can she disregard the great lesson of his preaching and his life, the warning which has been repeated by a religious teacher of another sort, by the poet Wordsworth, in reference to the age succeeding that of Tillotson, but with an obvious application to his own time and to ours:—

"Watchwords of party on all tongues are rife,
As if a Church, though sprung from heaven, must owe
To opposites and fierce extremes her life,
Not to the golden mean, and quiet flow
Of truths that soften hatred, temper strife."*

* Wordsworth, 'Ecclesiastical Sonnets,' Sacheverell.

ANDREWES,

THE CATHOLIC PREACHER.

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-*stone*:

"In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—*Ephesians* iii. 20–22.

Reasons for confining this Lecture to a view of Bishop Andrewes as a preacher—Sense in which the title "Catholic" is applied to him—To be valued for his matter rather than his manner—Widely different opinions of his style expressed by Dr. Birch, Bishop Horne, Archdeacon Hare—No injustice done to his Sermons by posthumous publication—Method of dealing with his text—Difficulty of selecting specimens of his manner—Sermon on Lamentations i. 12—The use that may be made of his Sermons (1) by a student of theology; (2) by a country parson—Has Andrewes a claim to be heard with advantage in our day?

I SHALL best consult my own safety, and I hope shall also best answer the purpose for which, at your Rector's request, I address you to-day, by keeping as closely as possible to the one subject which I have to submit to your consideration. I say this because there has recently appeared so masterly a portraiture of Bishop Andrewes as "A master in

English Theology," drawn by so able a pen,* that any intrusion upon the ground thus occupied would be indeed rash and presumptuous. Therefore, as I have said, my safety from such a charge will be found in confining my remarks strictly within the limits assigned to me by the title—"Bishop Andrewes the Preacher." Thus it will not fall within my scope to dwell upon the details of his life—the life of the earnest and unwearied student, of the generous patron, of the able diocesan, of the wise councillor, and (as revealed by the evidence of his private devotions) the holy and humble servant of Christ; but if, as Jones of Nayland tells us, "Bishop Andrewes is reported to have been the greatest civilian as well as the best preacher of his time, and they who best knew how to praise him said his character never was exceeded in any of the three capacities in which he excelled, that is, as *Doctor* Andrewes in the schools, *Bishop* Andrewes in the pulpit, and *Saint* Andrewes in the closet;" it is as "*Bishop* Andrewes in the pulpit" that we will now take some view of him.

There is one piece of refined and appreciative criticism to which I cannot refrain from drawing the attention of those who wish to form an estimate of

* I refer to the Lecture on 'English Theology' (King's College Lectures, 1877). Bishop Andrewes by the Dean of St. Paul's in 'Masters in

Bishop Andrewes as a preacher; I mean an article by the late Professor Mozley in the 'British Critic' —to which also the distinguished writer to whom I have alluded acknowledges his obligation—upon which, if need be, I shall draw with the less hesitation, because no one having to travel over the same ground can hope to do so with anything like equal ability and success, and because to it, if I remember rightly, I am indebted for first kindling in me some thirty-six years ago a desire to study Bishop Andrewes for myself.

The grounds upon which the title "Catholic" may be fitly ascribed to Bishop Andrewes need not be formally stated; nor need any strict definition of the term "Catholic" be attempted. It will suffice, if it shall appear that in his Sermons the whole circle of Christian doctrine is set forth in its amplest range, in its minutest details, with the most exact precision, with the connection of all the parts one with another and of each with the whole clearly marked; that for every particular doctrine the basis of Holy Scripture is asserted and carefully proved; that in these Scriptural proofs the teaching and authority of the Church from the earliest times is always appealed to and maintained; so that to almost a greater extent than any other preacher of our Church he habitually combines the deepest reverence for Holy Scripture as the inspired source of Christian truth and the supreme authority in all

matters of faith, with the upholding of the Church as being in a real and definite sense the interpreter of Scripture and the divinely authorised witness to Christian doctrine. The historical researches and the controversies of our day have made us familiar with this position of our Church; and it may seem to us comparatively easy to maintain it, but to the men of that generation the position was a new one and the task of vindicating it far from easy and simple. If they had to inscribe on the banners of the English Church "No Pope, and an open Bible," they had yet to affirm and to prove that "No Pope" did not mean "no historic Christianity" and "no Church authority"; and that "an open Bible" did not mean the casting off of all traditional interpretation of the Bible, and the abandonment of it to the wild speculations of individual minds and all the rough handling of unlearned and even profane men. I am not aware that Bishop Andrewes in his sermons anywhere propounds in explicit terms a theory for reconciling these co-ordinate truths—the open Bible and the interpretation of it in accordance with the ancient creeds and under the guidance of the great teachers of the primitive Church. Such a formal statement of his theory as a champion of the English Church is to be found his controversial writings, which are beyond the limits prescribed to our present subject. But it is not possible to read his Sermons without per-

ceiving that reverence for Holy Scripture and deference to ancient authority in the interpretation of it, as two golden threads, run through every discourse and every minute fragment of each. In support of this view I would appeal to that great series of sermons preached before Elizabeth and James I. in successive years from 1598 to 1622, which, beginning with the Incarnation of our Lord at Christmas, pursues its course through Lent, Good Friday, Easter, to Ascension Day and Whitsunday, unequalled, as I think they are, in fulness and exactness of doctrinal statement upon nearly all the highest and most important articles of the Christian faith. Two portions of this series I may particularly mention—the seventeen sermons on the Nativity and the fifteen on the sending of the Holy Ghost—as making the nearest possible approach to exhausting that which is inexhaustible, the mystery of our redemption in its beginning in the Incarnation of the Eternal Son to its consummation in the mission of the Comforter to build the Church "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The permanent indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the Church as the spiritual house, and in each Christian as a living stone in that house,

was ever declared by him to be the consummation of the redeeming work which, originating in the boundless love of the Father, was begun in the manger at Bethlehem.

It is readily admitted that the value of Bishop Andrewes' Sermons is to be found in his matter rather than in his manner, and that it is for his thoughts rather than for the style in which they are clothed that the study of them is to be recommended. Of his style, indeed, the most opposite opinions have been expressed. Nearly the most unfavourable judgment is that of Dr. Birch, who in his 'Life of Archbishop Tillotson' says, "The great corruption of the oratory of the pulpit may be ascribed to Dr. Andrewes, whose high reputation on other accounts gave a sanction to that vicious taste introduced by him." At the opposite extreme I may place the judgment of Bishop Horne, who intensely admired Andrewes, whose prayer it was that he might be found worthy at last to sit at his feet in a better world, and who wished to become a preacher after his model. This may suggest a curious subject of inquiry, how the study of one man's style by another, avowedly with a view to imitation, will, where there is any originality of mind, result in a style not at all resembling the proposed model. I have heard of two living divines, one of whom never commenced writing a sermon without studying a sermon of the other in order to shape his own after

that pattern. And yet the two styles are utterly unlike one another. Archdeacon Hare, in his Notes to 'The Mission of the Comforter,'* describes Bishop Andrewes as "a writer of such a singular, abrupt, jagged, tangled style, in reading whom one seems to be walking through a thicket crammed with thoughts and thoughtlets, and is caught at every tenth step by some out-jutting briar;" and again,† "Such trifling is too common in our good Bishop, and needs to be noticed now that the value of his writings, great as it is, is exaggerated beyond all measure." If, as I hope to show, the study of Andrewes may be highly beneficial to the churchmen of this generation, certainly it is not by servile imitation that the benefit will be secured or conferred.

Of the ninety-six sermons by which chiefly Bishop Andrewes is known as a preacher none were published in his lifetime. After his death, in obedience to the command of Charles I. they were published by Laud, then Bishop of London, and Buckeridge, Bishop of Ely. They did not suffer from the fact of their posthumous publication. It was a labour of love for the two prelates who undertook it. "Your Majesty" (they say in their preface) "gave us a strict charge that we should overlook the papers, as well sermons as other tractates, of that

* 'The Mission of the Comforter,' Note E.
† Ibid., Note G.

reverend and worthy prelate, and print all that we found perfect. There came to our hands a world of sermon notes, but these came perfect . . . as the sermons were preached, so are they published." And had the author himself published them there is no reason to suppose that they would have appeared in any different form. For whatever their faults of construction or style, they were never faults of haste or carelessness. "He was always" (says Bishop Buckeridge in his funeral sermon) "a diligent and painful preacher. Most of his solemn sermons he was most careful of, and exact; I dare say few of them but they passed his hand, and were thrice revised before they were preached; and he ever misliked often and loose preaching without study of antiquity; and he would be bold with himself and say when he preached twice a day at St. Giles's he prated once." "There were few of them," says Bishop Horne, "which were not thrice between the hammer and the anvil before they were preached."

The hammer and the anvil, a very suggestive image, denoting the elaboration of the subject with successive blows struck with the greatest rapidity. For let me now draw your attention to our Bishop's way of dealing with his text. There are many different ways of handling texts. Some preachers having taken their text dismiss it without further notice. From beginning to end there is no mention of it; it served as a peg on which to hang their

address, and having answered its purpose it is clean forgotten. Some, again, use their text as affording a convenient opportunity for importing into Holy Scripture their own opinions, theories, schemes of doctrine: and in their hands every text is made by some ingenious process to yield the same meaning, exhibit the same truth, with little variation in the form. Others, having a theory that the Bible is intended to be understood and interpreted in a spiritual sense only, are never tired of depreciating the letter in order to exalt (what they deem) the spirit, until they have evaporated all definite meaning, and have left the written Word far behind in their airy pursuit of some higher spiritual sense. There are other varieties which will occur to you. What, then, is our Bishop's method? He takes his text and he sticks to it. He has no artificial preface, in which, as by successive parallels, he gradually approaches his subject; no laboured exordium; but his text at once. He sticks to it, as a man resolved never to let it go until he has shaken the last atom of meaning out of it—sentence, clause, word, letter. Yes, Andrewes would, I fear, incur the charge of being a literalist! To this his practice of minute verbal discussion is due that which Archdeacon Hare calls his "trifling." And it must be confessed that his quaint humour sometimes betrays him into a trivial playing upon words, which seems to have been to many writers of the highest genius

in that age a temptation too strong to resist. It was in some such sense, I suppose, that a foreign ambassador whom James I. invited to hear his favourite preacher, remarked, "He playeth with his text, patting it to and fro, as a cat doth with a mouse." I would rather say, he rolls his text like a sweet morsel under his tongue, until he has extracted from it not only all its nourishment but the last vestige of its flavour. Hence he does not import meaning into his text, but educes meaning out of it. Amidst all his array of quotations from Old and New Testament in many versions, and all his display of patristic learning in numberless references to old Fathers, which sometimes make his page like a tesselated pavement; still the text is ever on the anvil, and the workman's hammer is being again and again applied to it, and at every blow fresh sparks are elicited. If it may sometimes be objected to him that he swings backwards and forwards as a door upon its hinge, seeming to make progress rather than making it, yet it must be allowed that it is always the text that furnishes the hinge on which he swings. Often his sermons, or portions of them, are meditations rather than sermons; meditations shaping themselves into sermons, in which the thought seems to have wholly occupied him to the exclusion of care for the language. And this is the source of some of the defects of his style. A thought springs up, is instantly clothed in words; to

this another quickly succeeds, and before it is fully developed a third starts up from the fertile soil, and by its quick growth checks and obscures those which just preceded it. The result is a broken and often a tangled style, in which, in spite of all his efforts to maintain order and method, the threads cross and recross one another until the pattern is confused and hard to make out. One who set a high value upon the Bishop's writings says, "I own, however clear-headed I might be when I sat down to read one of the sermons, I invariably rose at the conclusion of it with my brain bewildered and confused."

It is not easy to detach isolated passages for quotation which shall convey a just impression of a writer who depends for the effect he wishes to produce not upon the recognised arts of great orators and rhetoricians, and whose merit consists not in sustained grandeur of thought or language, nor the highly wrought pictures of a powerful imagination, so much as in simple and earnest exposition, in close and homely appeals to the conscience clad in a garb, to our modern taste, rough and unattractive. An analysis of one of his sermons, such as that made by Professor Mozley,* of the sermon on Psalm lxviii. 18, would more fairly answer the purpose; but this the time would not permit.

* In the 'British Critic' for January, 1842.

I will therefore content myself with one or two specimens, of which the first only is an exceptionally favourable example of the Bishop's manner, the others not above his average. He is preaching on the Passion of our Blessed Lord: his text is Lamentations i. 12,* "Have ye no regard, O all ye that pass by the way? Consider and behold if ever there were sorrow like my sorrow, which was done unto me, wherewith the Lord did afflict me in the day of the fierceness of his wrath." About the Person who thus speaks he can have no doubt; all antiquity declares it to be Christ. Granted that in some lower sense the prophet may be expressing his own and his nation's sorrow, mourning the death of their excellent King Josiah and the desolation of their land. But the fulness of its meaning is to be found only when uttered by Christ on the Cross; the consentient voices of the Fathers so declare, and our Bishop is content. He then fastens upon two leading points, the simplest possible, both upon the surface of his text—the sufferings of the speaker, and the indifference of men to those sufferings. For the sufferings, their quality and extent, bodily, mental, spiritual; he takes the word "sicut," from the Vulgate, as his pivot or hinge, "sicut dolor Meus," and he applies it to each in succession. If in respect of bodily suffering there may perchance

* The text is given us in the Genevan Version.

have been cases that admit of a "sicut"—a comparison with His case; yet in mental and spiritual suffering there can be no "sicut," no comparison of any one with Him. Was ever sweat "sicut iste sudor," like unto that bloody sweat, in the garden? Was ever cry, "sicut iste clamor," like unto that cry upon the cross? And so through many particulars of sorrow, until he reaches the petition adopted by the ancient Fathers of the Greek Church in their liturgy, "Δι' ἀγνωστῶν κόπων καὶ βασάνων ἐλέησον καὶ σῶσον ἡμᾶς, By Thine unknown sorrows and sufferings, felt by Thee, but not distinctly known by us, have mercy upon us, and save us." Then, the second point; all these sufferings aggravated by the sheer and utter indifference with which men regarded them, the very men for whose sake they were all endured.

Then towards the close of the sermon, gathering up the threads and threadlets in a passage which, although it cannot have the advantage of his inimitable delivery, which is reported to have added such a charm to all his words, will still be thought one of exquisite pathos, he says: "Yes sure, His complaint is just. Have ye no regard? None? And yet never the like? None? And it pertains unto you? No regard? As if it were some common ordinary matter, and the like never was? No regard? As if it concerned you not a whit, and it toucheth you so near? As if He should say, Rare

things you regard, yea, though they no ways pertain to you; this is exceeding rare, and will you not regard it? Again, things that nearly touch you you regard, though they be not rare at all: this toucheth you exceeding near, even as near as your soul toucheth you, and will you not yet regard it? Will neither of these by itself move you? Will not both these together move you? What will move you? Will pity? Here is distress never the like. Will duty? Here is a person never the like. Will fear? Here is wrath never the like. Will remorse? Here are sins never the like. Will kindness? Here is love never the like. Will bounty? Here are benefits never the like. Will all these? Here they be all, all above any 'sicut,' all in the highest degree. Truly the complaint is just, it may move us; it wanteth no reason, it may move; and it wanteth no affection in the delivery of it to us on His part to move us. Sure it moved Him exceeding much; for among all the deadly sorrows of His most bitter Passion, this, even this, seemeth to be His greatest of all, and that which did most affect Him, even the grief of the slender reckoning most men have it in; as little respecting Him as if He had done or suffered nothing at all for them. For lo, of all the sharp pains He endureth He complaineth not, but of this He complaineth, of no regard; that which grieveth Him most, that which most He moaneth is this.

It is strange He should be in pains, such pains as never any was, and not complain Himself of them, but of want of regard only. Strange He should not make request, O deliver me, or relieve me! But only, O consider and regard me! In effect as if He said, None, no deliverance, no relief do I seek; regard I seek. And all that I suffer, I am content with it; I regard it not, I suffer most willingly, if this I may find at your hands, regard. Truly, this so passionate a complaint may move us, it moved all but us; for most strange of all it is, that all the creatures in heaven and earth seemed to hear this His mournful complaint, and in their kind to show their regard of it. The sun in heaven shrinking in his light, the earth trembling under it, the very stones cleaving in sunder, as if they had sense and sympathy of it, and sinful man only not moved with it. And yet it was not for the creatures this was done to Him, to them it pertaineth not: but for us it was, and to us it doth. And shall we not yet regard it? Shall the creature, and not we? Shall we not?"

The following passage is from one of his sermons on the Resurrection from 1 Peter i. 3, 4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not

away, reserved in heaven for you." For simple strength and terseness, I do not think it easy to surpass the few sentences in which he connects the Christian hope with the risen Saviour. "Shall we do hope no wrong? The truth is, hope hears evil without a cause. The fault is not hope's, the fault is our own; we put it where we should not, and then lay the blame upon hope, where we should blame ourselves for wrong putting it. For if ye put it not right, this is a general rule: as is that we hope in, so is our hope. 'Ye lean on a reed,' saith Esay; 'Ye take hold by a cobweb,' Job. 'Ye catch at a shadow,' saith the Wise Man. And can it be then but this hope must deceive you? We for the most part put it wrong, for we put it in them that live this transitory, perishing life; we put it in them that must die, and then must our hope die with them, and so prove a dying hope. 'Miserable is that man, that among the dead is his hope,' saith the Wise Man. The Psalm best expresseth it: 'Our hope is in the sons of men,' and they live by breath, and when that is gone 'they turn to dust,' and then there 'lies our hope in the dust.' For how can ever a dying object yield a living hope? But put it in one that dies not, that shall never die, and then it will be 'spes viva' indeed. No reed, no cobweb-hope then, but helmet, anchor-hope—'hope that will never confound you.' And who is that, or where is He, that we might hope in Him? That is

'Jesus Christus spes nostra'—Jesus Christ our hope, so calls Him St Paul. Such shall their hope be that have Christ for their hope. Yet not Christ every way considered—not as yesterday in the grave; not as the day before, giving up the Ghost upon the Cross; dead and buried yields but a dead hope. But in Jesus Christ "hodie," Jesus Christ to-day—that is, 'Christus resurgens,' Christ rising again. Christ not now a living soul, but a quickening Spirit."

In a Whitsunday sermon on the text "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption," dwelling upon the office of the Holy Ghost to apply the redeeming work of Christ and make it effectual to each Christian soul, seeing "that Christ without the Holy Ghost is as a deed without a seal," he presses upon his hearers the necessity not only of duly receiving this seal, this impress of Christ upon the heart, but of watching over it when received, of guarding it from injury, of keeping it whole and clear, lest some rubbed, faint, half-effaced impression of Christ avail not to prove us His in the day of redemption. "For when we have well and orderly received it, then doth it behove us carefully to keep the signature from defacing or bruising. If we do not, but carry it so loosely as if we cared not what became of it, and, where we are signati to be close and fast, suffer every trifling occasion to break us up, have our souls lie so open as all manner of thoughts may pass and

repass through them; is not this a third (way of grieving the Holy Ghost)? When one shall see a poor countryman, how solicitous he is, if it be but a bond of no great value, to keep the seal fair and whole; but if it be of higher nature, as a patent, then to have his box, and leaves and wool, and all care used it take not the least hurt; and on the other side, on our parts, how light reckoning we make of the Holy Ghost's seal, vouchsafe it not that care, do not so much for it as he for his bond of five nobles, the matter being of such consequence; this contempt, must it not amount to a grievance? Yes, and that to a grave gravamen, a grievous one."

Returning now to the series of sermons of which I have spoken, and viewing them as a whole, I think it scarcely possible to set too high a value upon them as presenting a complete system of instruction in elementary fundamental Christian doctrine. If we accept the recognised division of Christian doctrine under four heads: 1, de fide; 2, de sacramentis; 3, de præceptis; 4, de oratione—*i.e.* the creed, the sacraments, the ten commandments, and prayer, the Lord's Prayer—and if we are desirous of being instructed or of instructing others in these fundamental truths of Catholic and Apostolic teaching, thoroughly, exactly, in strict accordance with Holy Scripture, with constant reference to primitive teaching, in a manner to preserve the due proportions of the Christian scheme, and to form one harmonious whole,

we can have recourse to no richer storehouse, whence to draw materials for building up ourselves and our brethren in our most holy faith. And I would claim on behalf of these Sermons that they are at once simple and profound. Are they not simple when the preacher can show you that all his matter lies in the very letter of the text before you? And are they not profound when you confess how much there is in the text which without the aid of the preacher you would not have discovered or observed?

I will suppose the case of a country parson desiring to guide his rustic congregation into an accurate knowledge of Christian doctrine as it is held and taught in our Church Prayer-Book. Now it is not easy to imagine a stronger contrast than would be presented by the two scenes. In the one, the most learned prelate of his day, reputed to be skilled in fifteen languages, addressing a king who had some learning, and affected a great deal more, and his assembled courtiers, in language which perhaps owes some of its faults to the attempt to adapt it to the taste of the pedantic monarch, with scraps of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and frequent quotations from ancient Fathers. In the other, the unlettered country folk with their poor vocabulary of three hundred or four hundred words;* their

* See Max Müller's 'Lectures on the Science of Language,' First Series, p. 268. It is probable, however, that to this

limited knowledge, that scarce travels beyond the boundaries of their own village; their untrained minds, childlike and too often childish, little able to lay hold of any abstract thought or follow any consecutive chain of reasoning, yet withal looking up and wishing to be fed, and he their appointed pastor, no Bishop Andrewes, no deeply learned theologian, anxious to feed them and to lead them in the "old paths" of wisdom and safety. Now, great as is the contrast between the Court of James I., at the beginning of the seventeenth century, gathered at Whitehall with Bishop Andrewes to preach to them, and the village congregation assembled around their customary teacher, now near the end of the nineteenth century, I believe that with patient painstaking the labours of the prelate may be made highly serviceable to the country parson. Bishop Andrewes was himself a patient worker at his sermons; and I ask for equal patience on the part of any one who would make use of him. And with patient painstaking I think he may succeed in making out of many a sermon of the Bishop's another sermon at once new and old; level to the understanding of his simple hearers; interesting to them who love full and clear explanations of Scripture, with short anti-

scanty number may be added a good many unwritten words in local use, describing implements, processes, &c., in the various branches of country life.

thetic sayings, homely proverbs, and images drawn from nature and every-day life; who do not weary of the iteration and reiteration of an idea in its interrogative and its affirmative, in its negative and its positive form. Yes! the sermon would be at once new and old, so completely would it have to be recast, so much would have to be retained of the substance, and so much to be altered of the form. I am confirmed in this opinion by a remark made to me the other day by one who was until lately the Principal of a Theological Training College, that he had adopted the practice of setting the students to deal with one of these Sermons in some such way as I have described; and that he found that not only was the process useful for their instruction in theology, but that the manner in which the task, admitting of great variety of treatment, was executed was no mean test of skill, and indeed of intellectual power.

I cannot but be aware, my brethren, that in the opinion of some the systematic study of theology is a thing of the past, dead and not needing to be recalled to life, rather a hindrance than a help to maintaining and extending the influence of real Christianity in an age that requires quite another kind of spiritual and intellectual food than a creed, a sacrament, a divine command, and a simple prayer can supply. If this judgment be accepted as correct, it must be conceded that Bishop Andrewes has no

standing-ground among the men of this generation; that his sermons and writings, in which he devoted his vast learning, his unwearied labour, and his fervent piety to the defence and inculcation of the Catholic faith, may be consigned to oblivion as things worn-out and obsolete.

But if, as others think, the thorough and accurate study of Divine truth as once delivered and once held can never be safely abandoned; if among the causes of that widespread infidelity which many are deploring, and for which various remedies are suggested, one is ignorance (even in our educated classes), sheer ignorance, to be traced to the neglect of careful training in the definite doctrines of the Church; if this neglect is to be repaired, this lack supplied, then the works of our Bishop remain a lasting possession of great value to this generation, and will remain to the generations of Churchmen that are yet to come.

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