

The Belle Sauvage
LIBRARY.



PULPIT
TABLE TALK.
BY
DEAN RAMSAY.

CASSELL, PETER & GARDNER
SERIAL PUBLICATIONS,
Publishers in Trade, Science and Health Series

Library of Theological Seminary, Princeton, N.J.

The Seminary is indebted to the publishers for the loan of this volume.

Library of The Theological Seminary

PRINCETON • NEW JERSEY



FROM THE LIBRARY OF THE
REVEREND JOHN ALEXANDER MACKAY
LITT.D., D.D., LL.D., L.H.D.

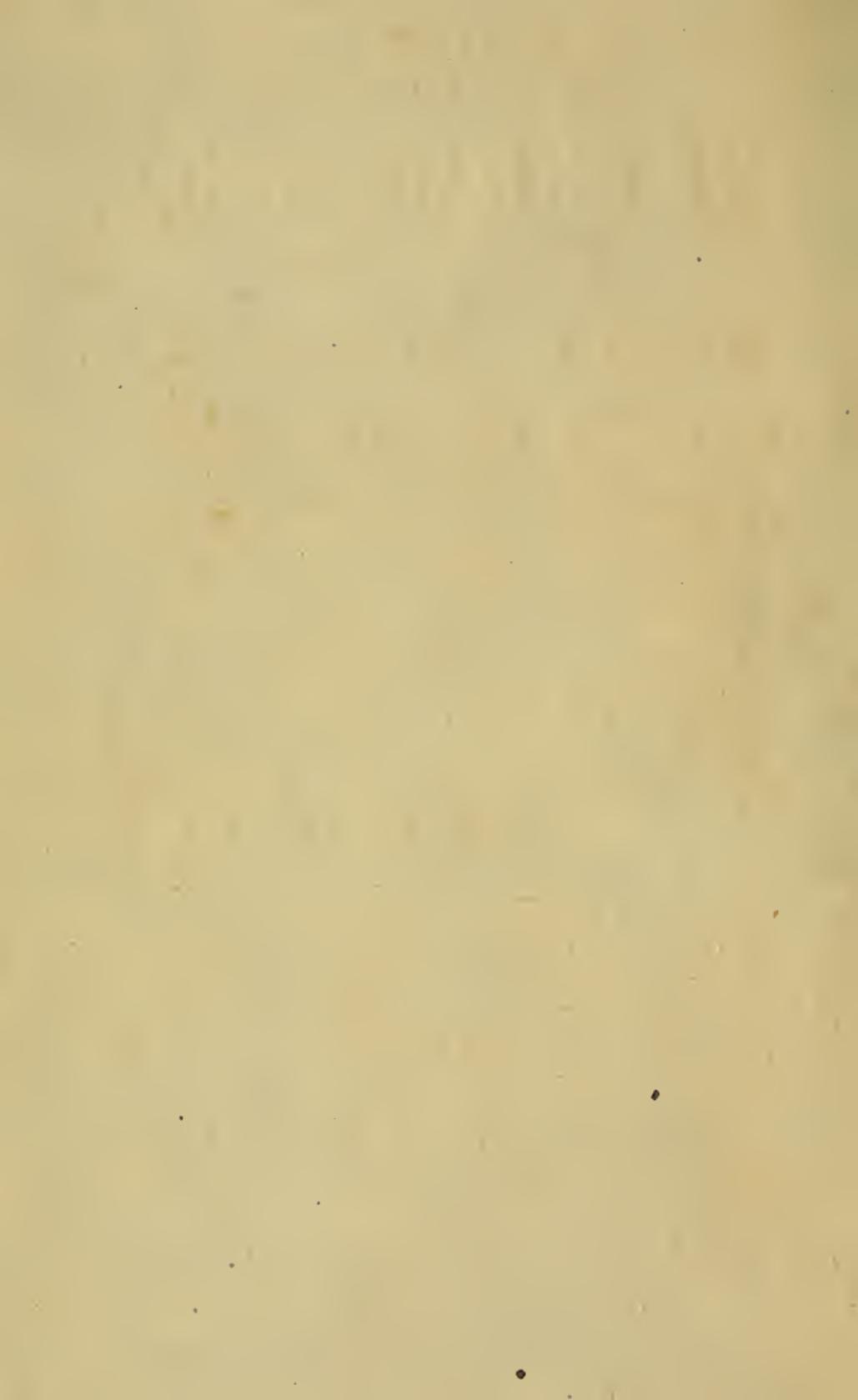
BX 7233 .B8 P9

Ramsay, E. B. 1793-1872.

Pulpit table-talk

CASSELL'S INTERNATIONAL CATALOGUE
of
SERIAL PUBLICATIONS
PUBLISHED BY CASSELL, PETER & GARDNER
LONDON AND NEW YORK

CASSELL, PETER & GARDNER
Publishers in Trade, Science and Health Series



J. Macdonald
Gordon
1905

Pulpit Table-Talk.

THE BELLE SAUVAGE LIBRARY.

NOV 14 1963

PULPIT

TABLE-TALK:

CONTAINING

*REMARKS & ANECDOTES ON PREACHERS
AND PREACHING.*

BY

✓
EDWARD B. RAMSAY, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S.E.,
Dean of Edinburgh.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON AND NEW YORK:
CASSELL, PETTER, AND GALPIN.

THE RIGHT REV. SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, D.D.,
Lord Bishop of Oxford;

THE RIGHT REV. CHARLES WORDSWORTH, D.D.,
In the Scottish Episcopal Church, Bishop of St. Andrew's;

THE REV. HENRY MELVILL, B.D.,
Canon of St. Paul's;

THE REV. NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D.,
*In the Established Church of Scotland, Minister of Barony Church,
Glasgow;*

THE REV. W. LINDSAY ALEXANDER, D.D.,
Minister of Augustine Church, Edinburgh;

THE REV. THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.,
*In the Free Church of Scotland, late Minister of St. John's Church,
Edinburgh;*

IN THEIR SEVERAL POSITIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH,
DISTINGUISHED PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST,

This little Volume,

“PULPIT TABLE-TALK,”

IS INSCRIBED,

WITH THE SINCERE RESPECT AND ADMIRATION

OF

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.



LECTURE I.

	PAGE
IMMENSE NUMBER OF SERMONS	5
STYLES OF PREACHING	10
SCOTTISH PREACHERS	28
MODES OF PREPARING SERMONS	31
PREACHERS OF DIFFERENT ERAS	38
SLEEPING IN CHURCH	44
QUAINT TEXTS	55
SAINT CHRYSOSTOM	63
„ „ ANECDOTES OF	72

LECTURE II.

MEDIÆVAL PREACHERS	82
PETER OF BLOIS	88
METRICAL HOMILIES	97
REFORMATION PERIOD	99
PURITAN AGE	103
HOOKE—BARROW—TAYLOR	110
FRENCH PREACHERS	111
NONCONFORMIST PREACHERS	116
AMERICAN PREACHERS	127

PREFACE.



THE Edinburgh Philosophical Institution is one of the most important of the Scientific and Literary Associations of the Northern Metropolis. It has been in operation for some years, and the late Lord Brougham was President from its commencement. The Institution has purchased a house, and possesses a valuable library, reading-room, classrooms, and other appliances for classes and for encouraging studies in Literature and Science. Public and popular Lectures are delivered throughout the winter session; and some of the most distinguished scholars, historians, and philosophers of the day have contributed their valuable share of such instruction. I need only mention a few names as examples—Lord Brougham, Dean Stanley,

Bishop of St. David's, Principal Tulloch, Earl Stanhope, Dean Hook, Professor Blackie, &c. &c. In 1866 the author of the present volume had the honour of delivering two Lectures on "The Pulpit." They were entirely of a popular character, and might have been termed rather Sketches of Preachers and Preaching, than regular dissertations on pulpit eloquence. The text has been revised and corrected throughout, and a few additional remarks have been inserted in further illustration of the subject. The title of "Pulpit Table-Talk" has been chosen, as pointing out the popular and discursive character of the volume; and, for the same reason, the form of an oral Lecture, as it was delivered, has been retained, rather than the more didactic form of an Essay or Treatise.



PULPIT TABLE-TALK.

FIRST LECTURE.



THE subject on which I am to have the honour of delivering two Lectures, is one to which I may be supposed to have been led by the force of habit and the ordinary bias of professional associations. Let it be remembered, however, at the same time, that the subject may fairly be considered in its more general bearings as congenial with many of those topics which it is the express object and purpose of such an Institution as the "Edinburgh Philosophical" to elucidate and to advance. For example, it naturally connects our thoughts with the distinctive characteristics of the various periods of civil and ecclesiastical history. It brings before us the influences of oratory on the human mind,

especially as such oratory bears upon questions of the last importance to human happiness and well-being. It will lead us to estimate the graces of literary composition, the power of reasoning, and the exposition of truth. It will suggest, also, an analysis of peculiarities connected with the mental qualities of some of those eminent characters who have appeared in the Christian Church. Reminiscences of the pulpit must be looked on as a subject closely connected with the ordinary course of human life—a subject constantly mingled with men's thoughts and ever-recurring experiences.

In many respects the eloquence of the Pulpit differs materially from the eloquence of the Senate or the Bar. The preacher has his subject, his argument, his summing up, all to himself; his discourse ends, his audience disperse. The speaker in Parliament or in Court must be prepared to have advantage taken of any slip which he may unfortunately have

made as to law or fact. He knows that opponents are impatiently waiting for the end of his speech, when they will have *their* turn. Hence, in parliamentary and forensic speaking we have acute and subtle objections to statements already made, we have smart repartee, we have ridicule, we have angry disputation and sharp invective. Preaching usually, therefore, takes a far more quiet and composed attitude than secular oratory. Just consider what an important element of social life the pulpit has become in modern times. Consider the number of persons interested in pulpit ministrations every Sunday in the year! In reference to this view of preaching I have made the following calculation of the *number* of sermons actually delivered from the pulpits of Great Britain, and listened to by congregations of hearers assembled together for the purpose:—Taking the *Clergy List* of the Church of England for 1864, I find 260 pages. On an average there are

70 churches and chapels on each page. This gives 18,200 places of worship for the Establishment. The Dissenting places of worship of all denominations, it is said, are equal in number with those of the Church—but say they are 2,000 less. This would give us 16,200 places of worship besides parochial churches. Then, from the *Edinburgh Almanac*, we find that the Established Church of Scotland, with its 16 synods and 84 presbyteries, contains 1,235 places of worship; the Free Church, with 16 synods and 71 presbyteries, about 985; Dissenters of all persuasions from the Scottish Established Church (United Presbyterian Associate Synod, Independents, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians) may be taken, I am informed, at 900 churches, making a total of 37,520 churches in Great Britain. Now, in some of these one sermon only is preached; in a good many *three* are preached, and in most two. So that giving two weekly sermons to each would

be a fair and perhaps a low average. This makes 75,040 sermons delivered every Sabbath-day in the churches of Great Britain alone, or the enormous number of 3,902,080 —*i.e.*, near FOUR MILLIONS of sermons during the year!

I am quite conscious that there may seem a degree of presumption in any one, whose habits and information are not those of an experienced literary character, undertaking to lecture upon a subject so vast as the Christian pulpit. Still I think that, without pretending to grasp the question in its full amplitude, it may be interesting and instructive to mark in a familiar and popular manner *some* of its more salient points, and to show some special characteristics of those who, in various periods of the Church, have been amongst its more distinguished preachers. I thought I could recal some anecdotes and reminiscences connected with preaching: and perhaps it is right to acknowledge that

I may have been partly led to this subject by a latent wish to bring before a Scottish audience some remarks upon our two great Scottish preachers, the effects of whose pulpit oratory many of us still remember. As a Scotchman ever anxious to do honour, however humbly, to Scottish genius, I am proud to think that in this high department of sacred literature we have two such distinguished names as Thomas Chalmers and Edward Irving.

Let me offer here a preliminary remark. These Lectures are now presented to the public nearly in the very same words as they were delivered before the members of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution in 1866. Those who honour me by reading them, therefore, ought to understand, not only what these Lectures contemplate, but also what these Lectures do *not* contemplate. In the first place, they are not to notice any living preachers, however eminent. We are to deal

only with the past. Secondly, these Lectures are not intended to make any reference to the soundness or unsoundness of the doctrines delivered from the pulpit by the preachers whom we are to notice. We disclaim sectarian considerations, and discard all party predictions. Various preachers of the Christian Church will be reviewed in reference to their mental powers, literary qualifications, historical associations with their own times, but without reference to the doctrines of the Church to which they belong. They will, in one word, be judged as *preachers*, not as theologians. We are simply to mark their efforts as they appear before us in the pulpit. One other preliminary remark let me make, and I make it as a warning of what my readers are to expect. I shall have no hesitation in illustrating what I have to explain by any anecdotes, however familiar, which may occur, as being at all appropriate for the purpose. I am quite convinced, and have

long been convinced, that a light is often thrown upon such questions as that of the effect of pulpit eloquence, by anecdotes which in themselves may seem trivial, or even ludicrous. The fact is, such anecdotes, when taken in connection with special or local circumstances, are more illustrative of the effects of preaching than many laboured descriptions of the lecturer or the author.

The object, then, which lies before us is, I may say, a twofold one. We are to consider *preaching* itself. To exhibit the pulpit as a great and important branch of Christian ministration. We are further to exhibit the practical discharge of the preacher's office, to show how it is amenable to certain fixed laws and principles, and to exhibit that office as in fact developed in certain varieties, and modified according to the talents, the natural dispositions, and acquired knowledge of various preachers. Whilst, then, I would deal with the pulpit as with an abstract question, as,

in fact, a Divine institution, I would deal with the *occupants* of the pulpit as ordinary men, themselves invested with all the attributes of a mortal nature; as men of whose powers, peculiarities, and shortcomings we can form our own opinion on the ordinary principles of human judgment. No doubt, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which the Church is commissioned to proclaim to a lost and guilty world, is one and the same for all times and for all recipients. But considering through how many minds it is conveyed, we must see how differently its proclamation will be treated by different individuals. The message itself is one and the same, but admits of being variously handled, and, therefore, must always take a special tone and colouring from the peculiarities of taste, temperament, and knowledge in the messenger. Hence arises what we may term the different schools, or different styles, which are to be found in preaching; in other words, the

different modes used by different ministers in enforcing the same great religious truth. From a great variety of such modifications, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to select *five* classes, as representing the most important differences usually prevalent amongst preachers. I would name—

1. *The abstract, or metaphysical style of Sermon.*

2. *The Biblical criticism style.*

3. *The moral, instructive, or purely didactic style.*

4. *The alarming or threatening style, which dwells upon the terrors of the Lord.*

5. *The gentle or persuasive style, which more especially urges the hopes and the promises of the Gospel.*

I think it will be of importance for us to have a clear notion of the leading characteristics of these various styles of preaching, in order that we may the better understand the peculiar features of particular *preachers*. It

will better enable us to show how the preponderance of one style may be injurious to the pulpit orator. It may help to show us how various modes of preaching come to be used and accepted according to circumstances, and how as different parts of the same message, they should be blended together and made to harmonise with each other and with the whole system.

I. A large number of English preachers may be placed in the first class, which we may call the *reasoning* class, more or less abstract or metaphysical. The discourses of such preachers are, in fact, dissertations. They are at one time in the shape of a discussion of some question bearing collaterally, and often very remotely, upon the vital questions of religion. Sometimes they constitute answers to some subtle sceptical *objection* to the truths of Revelation. Such discussions or dissertations take, no doubt, the form of a sermon, and of a sermon to be delivered; but they have no-

thing in them which partakes of the character of an *oration*—at any rate, can hardly ever partake of the eloquence that is oratorical. Close reasoning, ingenious argument, apt illustration, and even beautiful imagery, are, no doubt, often found in such discourses. An example of the latter has often been quoted from a sermon of Bishop Sherlock on Final Causes, as bearing upon the question of religious belief and the presumed object and purpose of a revelation from God to man generally. The doctrine of final causes is, no doubt, a difficult and abstract question. How happily, however, does this writer relieve and embellish his subject by the following comparison:—“Final causes,” he says, “are, in matters of faith, applicable to religion theoretically, not practically; but, like the vestal virgins, they guard the sacred light of the sanctuary, and are themselves barren and unfruitful.” Unfortunately, many such preachers have all the dryness of their subject with-

out any of the relief ; and therefore we think that discourses of this class are perhaps better suited for perusal in the closet than for delivery in the pulpit ; at any rate, better suited for private reading than for the pulpits of most churches. When delivered before an ordinary congregation, consisting of an audience of a mixed character, how few find it possible to follow or to retain the connection of the steps of a close-reasoned argument on some abstract question of evidence or of natural theology ; and I think no one will deny that to sit and listen to a discourse which you cannot follow must try the patience of the most assiduous hearer of sermons. Could we, for example, imagine a crowded congregation called together for the purpose of hearing the celebrated—I may say the illustrious — Bishop Butler, author of the “Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion.” Suppose the congregation assembled, attracted by the reputation of that wonderful work—

of which admiration is cherished alike by Episcopalians and Presbyterians, Churchmen and Nonconformists—and suppose that distinguished prelate to preach on such an occasion one of those immortal discourses which were so profoundly admired by Dr. Chalmers, and so constantly recommended by him to all his Divinity students—such a sermon as that on “the nature of virtue,” or “the office and functions of conscience”—*some* persons present might, no doubt, follow with delight and edification the closely-reasoned argument; but, alas! I fear there would be a general disappointment, and many of the great preacher’s hearers would not hesitate to pronounce it a very *dry* discourse. Indeed, it is from such sermons, able and admirable as they are, that the epithet of “dry” has been chiefly derived. Some men have none of the materials for making an eloquent preacher. They cannot clothe their ideas with the graces of natural diction, or with any of the *at-*

tractions of oratory; nor can they throw into their voice the energy of an oration. Their discourses may be suitable for study in the closet, but certainly not for hearing them delivered by others. As an example of such preaching, and that the driest of the dry—suppose a congregation assembled to listen to a sermon from the celebrated and very learned Dr. Richard Bentley, an eminent man and distinguished preacher of his day. Fancy their *excited attention* whilst he lays down his heads of discourse. “First, I will prove it impossible that the primary parts of our world, the sun and the planets, with their regular motions and revolutions, should have subsisted eternally in the present or a like frame and condition. Secondly, I will show that matter, abstractly and absolutely considered, cannot have subsisted eternally; or if it has, yet motion cannot have co-existed eternally with it as an inherent property and essential attribute of the Atheist’s God,

MATTER." One of our own Scottish divines, Dr. Macknight, author of an elaborate commentary on the Epistles, and of a work on Evidences—an able and learned man—was a remarkable example of this class of preachers. Logical and erudite, he could find no place for the relief of the imagination or of fancy in composing his discourses, could assume no fervour of enthusiasm in their delivery. Of this estimable divine, the pleasant story is told of what his colleague slyly remarked upon his pulpit ministrations. Dr. Macknight had been overtaken by a sharp shower in coming to church. In the vestry, and before the service began, the attendants were doing all in their power to make him comfortable by rubbing him with towels and other appliances. The good man was much discomposed, and was ever and anon impatiently exclaiming, "Oh, I wish that I was dry," and repeating often, "Do ye think I am dry eneuch now?" Dr. Henry,

his colleague, who was present, was a jocose man, of much quiet humour. He could not resist the opportunity of a little hit at his friend's style of preaching; so he patted him on the shoulder, with the encouraging remark, “Bide a wee, Doctor; bide a wee, and ye's be dry eneuch when ye get into the pulpit.” And some men are *always* dry in the pulpit. However easy and natural they may be elsewhere, in the pulpit they are constrained and enslaved by system. There they are artificial and formal, and *must* be dry.

II. The next class we spoke of is that which consists of sermons more especially devoted to Biblical criticism, or which makes the conclusion turn upon the interpretation or special application of some obscure text. It may be quite a new interpretation of some difficult passage, or one which, although familiar to the learned, is not generally known or popularly received. When such discussions become (as they are apt to do) mere

critical dissertations, they had then (like abstract arguments) better be studied in the closet than declaimed in the church. At the same time, there are many grand and effective sermons which turn upon the enforcement of a general and enlarged view of a passage different from the common one, and without any minute or dry details of verbal criticism. I should say some of the finest discourses of this class are to be found in the works of Bishop Horsley. I refer to such powerful sermons as that on the preaching to the spirits in Hades; his exposition of Psalm xlv., of Malachi iii.; the remarkable sermon on the Watchers of Daniel; the Syro-Phenician Woman, and others. In such discourses as these we are led to admire the learning and wisdom of the preacher; remarkable passages of Scripture come out with a force and power of application we had never known before.

Now, besides this question of Biblical inter-

pretation forming the basis of a sermon, there is the question of the bearing of the spirit of Holy Scripture upon the general character of sermon writing, and the use to be made of Scripture language in the pulpit, and these form a very important feature of the subject which we are now considering. Some sermons are little more than a *string* of texts. At the same time, sermons are preached which from the beginning to the end have no quotation from Scripture, or indeed hardly any direct reference to special passages of Scripture. I have heard a hearer of the late celebrated John Foster say that he never in his sermons quoted Scripture at all, and that he used to abstain from that practice because he considered himself unable to do justice to the sacred text. Others, again, abound in quotations, which are sometimes perhaps multiplied injudiciously, and without adding much to the force of the argument. But it seems essential to the due handling of

a subject for the authority of which the motives to enforcement and the full explanation of which we must appeal to Scripture, should have abundant reference to the pages of God's Word. Indeed, I should say without such reference *every* sermon must be considered wanting. There is, however, a third form of using Scripture language in sermons which is important. This is not either multiplying texts or directly *quoting* texts for authority and proof; what we now refer to is an indirect reference to Scripture events, or a happy application or adaptation of Scripture phraseology in the way of illustration to the question in hand. Such applications of Scripture as those I have in view give a grace and point to many observations in the discourses of eminent divines, and fix them in the memory for ever. Take a few examples. In speaking of the evils of division and of bitter party feelings being injurious to the unity and perfection of the Christian Church, Stillingfleet

thus refers to the incident recorded of the soldiers at our Lord's crucifixion: "Let us not rend the seamless robe of the Lord Jesus by our undutiful and unseemly division."

In speaking of the great advances which had been made in the philosophy of morals in consequence of the pure teaching of the Christian Revelation, and of the ungrateful return made by many philosophers of the new school, who have used the moral powers thus gained *against* Christianity, making it a subject of their sneers or objections, Bishop Sherlock, I think it is, says: "Shall the withered hand which Christ has healed be raised against Him?" Again, in asserting the natural connection between Christian doctrine and Christian practice—between a sound theology and a strict morality—a dry writer has the following beautiful apt illustration: "Faith should always be attended by Christian virtues. Like the king's daughter, they are the virgins that be her fellows, and they should ever bear her company."

III. Of didactic or moral discourses, the English pulpit furnishes innumerable specimens, as, indeed, at one period a large class of English sermon writers confined themselves to this style of discourse; and, certainly, Anglican pulpit theology has built up a most beautiful and complete code of Christian morals—a perfect system of ethics—applicable to all the incidents, the vicissitudes, and trials of human life; although it must be admitted that in this code moral virtues are often enforced and explained with too little reference to the motives and teaching of the great *doctrines* of our faith, and without marking the inseparable union and connection which ought always to exist between Christian morality on the one hand, and the deeper mysteries and the more awful revelations of the Gospel on the other. Many sermon writers of our own country have excelled in this department of preaching, and have powerfully expounded the great principles of Christian

morals. We might name Jortin, Secker, our countryman Blair, once so popular, now forgotten. But, above all, we should name Isaac Barrow as the great moral preacher of our Church. The very titles of his discourses indicate his determination to sift the moral virtues of the Gospel, and to expound their true bearing and essential characteristics. Thus, he has sermons on "slander," on "lying," on "detraction," on "foolish talk," on "swearing," on "contentment," on "patience," on "meekness," on "industry." He is so minute and so full in his analysis and application of such moral qualities, that it has been said of Barrow, he *exhausts* his subject; and I should add, it was wittily suggested, "Yes, and sometimes he exhausts his reader too."

IV. The fourth class of preachers we have named are in the alarming or threatening style. They specially dwell upon the "*terrors* of the Lord." Preachers of this school, no doubt, show a great anxiety to display the

more awful features of that Gospel which it is their office to proclaim and enforce. They would seek to warn men from evil by pressing on their conscience the terrors of the "*law*," rather than attract them to good by urging the forbearance and lovingkindness of the Gospel. This line of argument involves more or less minute descriptions of the misery that await the finally impenitent, and a more or less minute enforcement of those terrible denunciations which tell of a "worm that never dies, and of a fire unquenchable." Those who are acquainted only with the modern and ordinary modes of introducing details on these awful questions, have no idea of the minuteness with which sermon writers of the past times have dilated on the sufferings of the lost. Dante has been a sort of guide to certain expositors of the condition of the lost, and especially to Italian preachers. I recollect, some years back, a friend, who was a great student of Italian literature, lent me the Sermons

of Pastorini, and some of his descriptions are most extraordinary for their ingenuity and detail of dreadful sufferings. I might adduce passages also from the sermons of G. Whitefield, who was celebrated for such details. But I rather prefer showing what has been done in times past regarding this awful subject, and I will subjoin a few extracts from the homilies of a mediæval writer with whose *name* most persons are familiar, but whose *works* probably few have much knowledge of. I refer to Bede, the eminent saint of the northern church, usually called, from the sanctity that is associated with his name and character, *Venerable Bede*. His history of the Early Northern Church is valuable. He was born in 635, and died in 672, and his remains lie buried behind the altar of the magnificent Durham Cathedral. He left many homilies, from which some extracts regarding the lost may be taken, which will, whilst illustrating our subject, give you an idea

of mediæval preaching. One homily is on the Christian Sabbath, and Bede supposes St. Paul and St. Michael to petition that the lost souls might have rest on Sundays from their punishment. He says, in explanation—"It was the Lord's will that Paul should *see* the punishments of that place. He beheld trees all on fire, and sinners tormented on those trees; and some were hung by the feet, some by their hands, some by the hair, some by the neck, some by the tongue, and some by the arm. And again he saw a furnace of fire burning with seven flames, and many were punished in it: and there were seven plagues round about this furnace; the first was snow, the second ice, the third fire, the fourth blood, the fifth serpents, the sixth lightning, the seventh stench; and in that furnace itself were the souls of the sinners who repented not in this life. There they are tormented, and every one receiveth according to his works; some weep, some howl, some

groan, some burn and desire to have rest, but find it not, because souls can never die.”

Again—

“And after this he saw between heaven and earth the soul of a sinner howling betwixt seven devils, that had on that day departed from the body.” Then in another passage:—

“And Paul demanded of the angel, how many kinds of punishment there were in hell. And the angel said, There are a hundred and forty-four thousand; and if there were a hundred eloquent men, each having four iron tongues, that spoke from the beginning of the world, they could not reckon up the torments of hell.” The preacher then draws the practical conclusion, “But let us, beloved brethren, hearing of these so great torments, be converted to our Lord, that we may be able to reign with the angels.”

V. The gentle and persuasive style of preaching forms the antithesis to such representations as these, and must ever gain men's

hearts, and should therefore predominate in every address from a Christian minister. Such gentle words, when made predominant, but when mingled with a due proportion of the argumentative, and when relieved and modified by occasional sterner representations, constitute, in my opinion, the perfection of Christian pulpit oratory. The two last styles of preaching which I have named, the sterner and the more gentle style, are both referred to and pointed out in Holy Scripture. Thus we have St. Paul asserting the one when he declares: "Knowing the *terrors* of the Lord, we persuade men." And equally asserting the other when he besought the Corinthian converts "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." The three classes—the expository, the severe, and the gentle—are exquisitely described and most happily distinguished by Galt in his "Annals of the Parish;" of course, with special reference to Scottish preaching. Three neighbouring ministers have

been invited to take part in the sacramental services, and Mr. Balwhidder is supposed to characterise the nature of their several ministrations thus :—

“Mr. Keekie, of Loupington, was a sound preacher and a great expounder of the kittle parts of the Old Testament, being a man well versed in the Hebrew and etymologies.”

“Mr. Sprose, of Annack, was a preacher of another sort, being a vehement and powerful thresher of the word, making the chaff and vain babbling of profane commentators to fly from his hand.”

“Mr. Waikle, of Gowanry, was a quiet hewer out of the image of holiness in the heart.”*

Now it seems to me, pulpit eloquence, properly so called—I mean the power of exciting the passions, convincing the judgment, or warming the imagination—can only be effected

* Pp. 231, 232.

where some appeal is made to the taste and feelings as well as to the reason. The pulpit has its two offices or two departments. It has to discharge the office of instructing and informing the mind, and it also has the office of attracting men and of *persuading* them to action. The hearers of a sermon ought to leave the church prepared to *do* as well as to believe. Hence it follows that whilst some sermons are speeches or addresses, forming urgent appeals to men's hopes and fears, others are mere essays or discussions ; and he only can be called the sacred orator who addresses his people in a speech, and does not merely read to them a disquisition. To constitute the materials of pulpit eloquence, as I understand the term, there must a happy mixture of all these modes of address, or a suitable application of them to the circumstances of the congregation and to the sense of the text. We therefore pass from considerations connected with the various questions of pulpit

oratory, and the different styles of preaching, for a few moments, to considerations connected with the mode of preparing sermons and of *delivering* them from the pulpit. I think the following modes of preparing and delivering sermons have been adopted by different preachers.

First. A discourse may be carefully written out and prepared exactly as it is to be delivered, and may be read from the MS. That the method of reading every word is quite consistent with the utmost life and energy, no one of my hearers who remembers the preaching of the late Dr. Robert Gordon, or Dr. Chalmers, will be disposed to deny.

Second. A discourse after being so prepared, instead of being read, may be committed to memory, and delivered to the audience with the same correctness as if it had been read from the book.

Third. The preacher may not compose his sermon in full, but may fix upon the topics he

will introduce, and arrange the heads in order of discourse, in what is called a *skeleton*, and so fill up extempore as he proceeds the argument, and supply the details as he goes along. The skeletons of the late Rev. Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, are well known. I believe he kept a skeleton of every sermon he preached. Mr. Simeon carried a good idea to an extreme, and his work contains a vast quantity of repetition, and I don't think will conduce much to the advance of pulpit oratory. His twenty-one volumes seem to me but dry bones; although, no doubt, zeal and skill *may* "clothe them with sinews and flesh, and put breath into them and make them live."

A *fourth* method of preaching is the purely extempore or unprepared method—that is, the preacher enters the pulpit, selects even the text at random, and then delivers a discourse, the whole of which, both as to the arrangement, illustration, and argument, is unpremeditated. The failure of those who adopt

such a method is likely to be in argument and connection; although no doubt it might call forth, in persons of fervid imagination and ready powers of language, a brilliancy of oratorical display, and a boldness of metaphorical illustration, which no previous study or elaborate composition could attain.

There is, however, a fifth method, which has been made use of by accomplished preachers, although perhaps the least common method of all. It is neither the writing method, the skeleton method, or the extempore method. It is the method adopted by those who can build up their sermon in their own heads—compose it strictly and entirely, as well as to argument and illustration as to diction and imagery. They con it over till it has become a part and parcel, as it were, of their own mind. Then they bring it forth with all the accuracy of a regularly composed speech, at the same time with all the ease of an address which comes of what

is unpremeditated and spontaneous. Robert Hall, the English Nonconformist, one of the greatest preachers of modern times, whose sermons in the course of the next Lecture I shall have to introduce to you, was an eminent example of this method of preaching. Hall was a great invalid, and confined great part of his time to the sofa. He then got into the habit of mental composition, and being very particular in style, and having a most retentive memory, his most celebrated sermons were first delivered before the congregation, and then verbatim repeated to a reporter for publication. When Wilberforce was told of this habit on the part of Hall, he called it the *viviparous* mode of producing a sermon; that is, by a direct or living birth, as opposed to the oviparous process, of which the written MS. in other sermon producers represented the egg. I recollect my distinguished friend, the late Marquis of Dalhousie, having this power. When a can-

didate for East Lothian, as Lord Ramsay, he composed in his head, at Coalstoun, an elaborate speech, which he first delivered at Haddington, and then corrected the report which had been taken down, so as to make it a verbatim copy. On my mentioning the circumstance to the first speaker of the day, William Gladstone, I recollect his saying that he envied the power. Preachers will fall into one or other of these five methods of producing their sermons according to various circumstances—such, I mean, as of talent, memory, early habit, power of self-possession, &c. In some respects, whatever method is adopted, preachers will find that they can occasionally make use of the others. I have heard of regular extemporaneous preachers writing out and elaborating with great care particular passages which they desired to be specially effective. There is, of course, need of care and discrimination. Preachers may trust too much to the impulse and ex-

citement of the moment, so as to speak what is nonsense and injudicious and unguarded. Men may tie themselves down too closely by implicit confidence in a MS., like a worthy man, very desirous of making his sermons effective, who at very pathetic passages wrote at the margin of his MS., "Cry here;" and when, in after years, his sight and memory became confused, he astonished his hearers by crying in *wrong places*. Or, on the other hand, many a preacher may trust too implicitly to his extemporaneous power. Under particular circumstances he may lose his self-possession and confidence in himself, and, in short, fairly *break down*—an example of which a friend in Somersetshire used to adduce as having happened to a Methodist minister whom he had gone to hear. The man had gained some distinction as one of their local preachers, and on one occasion, when he was advertised for a missionary sermon, a large party of ladies and gentlemen in the neigh-

bourhood had come over to hear him. The poor man, confused at seeing so unusual a number of hearers of the higher rank before him, got quite confused, and wiping his forehead, in his agitation, could only bring out, in his Somerset dialect, "Leadies and gentlemen, I be aal in a puzzlement!"

Our subject seems now prepared for what must ever be considered as one of the most interesting topics connected with this great question of the pulpit. I mean the personal peculiarities—the talents, powers, and gifts of its most eminent *preachers*—of those who, in successive ages of the Church, have enlightened it by their learning, and adorned it by their eloquence. We are almost appalled at the vastness of the theme which seems to open before us in the pages of ecclesiastical history, and we feel very powerfully impressed with the fact, how little can be done to elucidate such a subject within the limits of two ordinary lectures. To see the extent of this field, just take

a brief sketch or survey of Christian preachers, arranged according to the order of different schools or different eras. We may thus group them into classes, of which each has its own characters and its own distinctive peculiarities.

1. First, we have preachers of what we may term the Scripture era. Those who, under the guidance of direct inspiration from above, first proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to a lost and guilty world, were called *preachers*; and even in the prophetic announcements such was the term made use of in reference to the future. Preaching is thus coeval with our holy faith, and the pulpit formed a constituent element of the Church from the beginning. Peter, and Paul, and Apollos, and Stephen preached the truth under which the world became Christian. Nay, the imperial sermon of our religion, the model of ALL sermons, was preached by the Son of God Himself upon the mountain brow which overhung the sea of Galilee.

2. Then we have what we may call preachers of the *Early Church*, of the Church when it first became a recognised element of the world's history — preachers, in short, amongst those writers usually termed *the Fathers*.

3. Then we have the preachers of the Middle Ages—the period included from the decline of literature and, as we think, of sound theology, to the Reformation, the darkest period of the Church's history—a period, however, in which there is no lack of preachers or of powerful and interesting preachers too, of whom I have already given you a striking specimen in extracts from sermons by Bede, and of whom I will place more examples before you in due course.

4. We have the preachers of the Reformation period, beginning from the time of Luther, embracing, most frequently, subjects connected with the power and the pretensions of the Papacy—a series including the preachers

of the different countries where the Reformation extended; chiefly Germany, Switzerland, Holland, England.

5. We have preachers of the *Church of England*—the preachers who, after the reformation of that Church had been accomplished in doctrine and in discipline, have for so long a series of years adorned it by their eloquence and defended it by their learning.

6. We have preachers of the Puritan school—the preachers of that party, whether Presbyterian or Independent, which subverted the throne and changed for a time the civil and ecclesiastical order of this great empire.

7. We have the preachers of the French nation—eminent in great names, including Protestant or Huguenot as well as Roman Catholic names.

8. We have a large body of English Nonconformist preachers—preachers ranked amongst Baptists, Methodists (Wesley and Whitefield), Independents, and Unitarians.

9. Scottish preachers, of whom the fame and the admiration have been universal.

What a wide field for our contemplation and our study is laid before us by this brief enumeration! We pass by the first class of preachers—the preachers named in Scripture—as involving questions more adapted to the chair of theology than to such lectures as these. We go on to the more advanced periods of the Church, and the preachers belonging to those periods. Now, we cannot help thinking that the very *frequency* of hearing the greatest truths, the very circumstance of the enormous number of sermons in latter days, if there be not some life and energy put into the mode of their deliverance, *must* itself tend to weariness. It may be said that it would be unreasonable to expect that, of the 75,040 sermons preached every Sunday in Great Britain, all or even a considerable portion shall be able and powerful discourses. We are quite ready to admit the truth of this;

but then we say there is no need that they should be dull. No person who has to communicate to others a message of personal appeal on a subject of surpassing importance to all, will deliver his message so as to make his address pointless or wearisome if he feel it deeply himself. No; he will not be dull if he is natural, if he is in earnest, if he is unaffected, if he speaks as if he felt that he was not speaking mere conventional language, or executing an office in a mere perfunctory manner. We cannot imagine any of the first preachers being dull. Indeed, we are constrained to believe that one palpable point of difference in our preaching from early preaching is in its *dulness*. The very phraseology of modern sermons has become conventional, and people seem afraid of words which are not *sermon* words. They are jealous of expressions which betray strong emotion, as savouring of fanaticism; a fastidious taste makes them reject all except the most commonplace

illustrations; and they dread discussions upon any points which lie out of the beaten path of hacknied topics, as bordering upon the province of the sceptic. I cannot resist the desire to give a specimen of this commonplace, and, as we would say in Scotch, "fashionless" style of sermon language. It is from Dr. Neale's preface to his volume on Mediæval Preaching. He narrates that, preaching for a friend, the incumbent told him he did not preach plain enough. He said he would show him in the afternoon how a congregation *should* be addressed. So he thus opened his afternoon discourse:—

"To those who will consider the harmony which reigns in the various accounts dictated by inspiration of Christ's passion, confirmed as those accounts are by the antecedent testimonies of prophets on the one hand, and by the concurrent testimonies of the Epistles on the other, it will appear in the highest degree *probable* that our Blessed Lord was not

an impostor, but was, in reality, what He gave himself out to be, the Son of God."

But here, let it be remarked, I make a distinction between a dry sermon and a dull sermon. A *dry* sermon we feel may be very clever and very full of interest and instruction, if only we could exert ourselves to attend. But we feel that, though abounding with learning and cleverness, we find it too severe, too unornamental, and, in fact, too much of a study, and, as an address, too unattractive. A *dull* sermon, on the other hand, we find to be prosy, poor, commonplace, and so pointless, both in matter and in manner, that we cannot attend with any earnestness or life. Now, this brings us to what may be deemed a somewhat delicate part of the subject of preaching. It is your *dull* sermon that causes that habit too often I fear associated with pulpit ministration—I mean the evil habit of *sleeping in church*. Considering the solemn nature of the ordinance, the great and important objects

on account of which men assemble in church, and the everlasting interests which are involved, the custom is most inconsiderate and unseemly. It must be a very serious matter for any one (voluntarily at any rate) to compose himself to sleep when he is listening to the exhortations and the statements of the minister of Christ. It is told of John Wesley, that when he observed some of his hearers asleep, he stopped in his discourse and shouted "Fire! fire!" The people were alarmed, and some one cried out, "Where, sir—Where?" To which Wesley earnestly and solemnly replied, "In hell, for those who sleep *under the preaching of the Word.*" It may be, however, that a hearer cannot, although he contend against sleep, keep himself awake. It is a serious question, whoever is to blame. Perhaps the fault is shared in part both by preachers and by hearers—that is, if some preachers give cause for this bad habit by the careless and indifferent mode of their discharging their office, both as to prepara-

tion and delivery. There are, I fear, at the same time, hearers who set themselves in an attitude of quiet repose, and, except when specially roused and excited, they are, whether from indulged habit or constitutional tendency, not at all averse to fall asleep during the process of preaching. Dean Swift has a sermon addressed to persons of this character, which he opens with his usual pungent power of wit. He takes for his text Acts xx. 9—the account of Eutychus falling asleep during the preaching of Paul, and being taken up dead. He commences with this sarcastic remark: “I have chosen these words with design, if possible, to disturb some part in this audience of half an hour’s sleep, for the convenience and exercise thereof this place at this season of the day is *very much celebrated.*” Then he goes on, in allusion to Eutychus sleeping in the window: “The preachers now in the world, however they may exceed St. Paul in the

art of setting men to sleep, do extremely fall short of him in the power of working miracles—therefore, hearers are become more cautious, so as to choose more safe and convenient stations and postures for their repose, without hazard of their persons, and upon the whole matter choose rather to trust their destruction to a miracle than their safety.”—Sermon upon *Sleeping in Church*.

Crabbe, in his poem, “*The Parish Register*,” graphically describes the effects of a new vicar upon certain individuals of a congregation who were addicted to this somnolent practice. Unlike the quiet preaching of his predecessor, the young minister’s words came down upon the flock like thunder, and they are thus described in their effect:—

“He such sad coil with words of vengeance kept,
That our best sleepers startled as they slept.”

A similar result has been described in a certain parish of our own country, on the Borders. An old clergyman, who had got a strong-lunged helper, observed that one of his hearers

was becoming rather irregular in his attendance at church. Of course, the divine felt it his duty to visit the backslider, and he accordingly went to the house; but the gude-man was not in. He inquired of the wife why John was so seldom at church now? "Oh, indeed, minister," she replied, without the least hesitation, "that young man ye've got roars sae loud that John canna sleep sae comfortable as he did when preachin' yersel, sae peaceably." A Nonconformist preacher, of much reputation in his day, with the same idea of arresting the people's ears, commences a funeral sermon on a good member of his congregation by shouting out three times, "Victory! victory! victory!"

The clergy are under an especial obligation to make their sermons to a degree attractive to their younger hearers: for if they exhort godfathers and godmothers to call upon their godchildren to "*hear sermons*," they should at least take some pains that such

hearing of sermons shall not be, from their own fault, an irksome task.

One thing, however, is quite clear to my mind, and the result of a pretty long experience, and that is, no quality can be more fatal to the influence of a sermon than that of *dulness*. The witty Sydney Smith used to say, somewhat profanely, "Sir, in a sermon, the sin against the Holy Ghost is dulness." I often think of the remark made to me by a dear relative, of high mental qualities and endowments, in regard to preaching: "Rather than see you dull and commonplace, I would see you bordering upon the eccentric or startling."

Sterne, who was certainly as much removed from the charge of *dulness* as most men, offered this excuse to the Archbishop of York for the eccentric manner in which one of his published sermons commenced. He was determined to stop the wandering thoughts of his hearers, and secure their atten-

tion to him. So, after giving out his text from Eccles. vii. 2—"It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting," he flatly commenced his sermon with these words—" *That I deny!* "

A similar case of determination to rouse the attention of his audience to his text, though of a less refined character than Sterne's, I have heard told of an illiterate but clever Methodist preacher, who was a collier of the district in Somerset where I held a curacy for seven years. He gave out for a text—"I can do all things." He then paused, and, looking at the Bible keenly, said, in his own native Somersetshire dialect:—"What's that thee says, Paul—'I can do aal things?' I'll bet thee half-a-crown o' that." So he took half-a-crown out of his pocket, and put it on the book. "However," he added, "let's see what the Apostle has to say for himself." So he read on the next words, "through Christ that strengtheneth me." "Oh!" says he, "if that's

the terms of the bet, I'm off." And he put the half-crown into his pocket again, and preached his sermon on the power of Christian grace.

But although dulness in sermons may be an evil, extravagance and eccentricity may be worse evils. It is the part of wisdom and of well-regulated zeal to avoid all extremes. What we want in the pulpit is the earnest, unaffected manner in which a sensible and feeling mind would desire to communicate to others, sacred and solemn truths which are, to himself and hearers, all-important for the interests of time and of eternity. But whilst I was engaged in preparing these remarks, I met with an admirable passage upon the very subject, which I have great pleasure in laying before you, as being far superior to anything which I could give you of my own. It seems to me to meet the question very fairly. They are the words of Dr. Caird, an esteemed clergyman of the Established Church of Scotland,

and universally known as the author of a sermon preached before Her Majesty, on "Religion in Common Life."

"There is," Dr. Caird writes, "a rising spirit of interest and inquiry into theological questions among the educated laity, of which many seem but little aware. Let such men, as they listen, perceive by a thousand indications which are insensible, that the speaker is one abreast of the culture of the age, knowing something of what its deepest speculators have said and sweetest poets have sung; let them feel that he is a good and pious man, sincerely attached to the Church he loves, but also that his piety has not soured or narrowed him, nor his ecclesiasticism made him intolerant; in one word, let men, as they listen to him, feel that he is one who creates their respect at once for the qualities of head and heart, and it is incalculable the power over them for good which such a teacher will possess."

One essential accompaniment of modern pulpit productions, in which it differs from the early practice, we may, I think, suitably take into consideration at the present time. I allude to the established use of precluding every sermon by a text of scripture, the express object of which is to fix and define the subject, and to direct the order in which it shall be treated. Nothing, I think, shows more strongly the formal, or as we may say, in common parlance, the cut-and-dried style of modern sermons, than the way in which hearers usually resent a minister's too discursive style of treating his subject, and his introducing a variety of topics, because, as it is said, it is a wandering from his text. "Stick to your text, my lord," it is recorded Queen Elizabeth sharply reminded one of her bishops, whom she considered was deviating into subjects which were rather irrelevant, and which were, in fact, somewhat distasteful to the royal ears. "Stick to your text" has, I believe, not unfrequently

been inwardly murmured by hearers not quite so fastidious as the imperious and arbitrary Queen of England.

Texts, however, though now considered so necessary a part of the sermon, were not always in use; and it would be curious to know when the practice of texts came to be the iron and unbending rule it now is with preachers in England. It certainly was not so always in earlier times. Sometimes there was no text; sometimes it was taken from a verse of a hymn. In some of the sermons of Clarke, an English divine, who was one of the translators of the Bible, the text is taken from the Catechism.

In many parts of Europe, though not a law, still it was a very rigid custom, and seldom departed from, to take the text from the Epistle or Gospel of the day. This, of course, led sometimes to a good deal of ingenious turning of words to suit the preacher's purpose. Indeed, the connection of the text with the

subject is often unnatural and forced. One of Massillon's best sermons, on the coldness and languor with which Christians too often perform the duties of religion, is preached from Luke iv. 38, and taken from the Gospel of the day: "And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. *And Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever;*" which of course the preacher ingeniously turns to sickness and languor of religious feeling. On the authority of Dr. Neale, we learn that the law which prescribes taking the text either from the Epistle or Gospel is so strict in the Swedish Church Establishment (where we would not expect to find it), that a Commission is sitting for the addition of fresh Epistles and Gospels, not to be used in the liturgy, but to afford a greater variety of texts to the preacher. It seems a strange restriction; and yet we find the great and good Bishop Cosin *lamenting*, in one of his sermons, that permission had been given to the clergy to choose

their text from any other portion of Scripture than those appointed for the day. I have been told that now, or lately, in some of the large towns of Germany, another rule prevails. In the beginning of the week a text is given out, and whatever church you enter the preacher must adopt and handle the same text.

There is often great force, and sometimes a covert meaning, conveyed in the choice of a text. An anecdote illustrative of this is recorded of Dr. Paley, the well-known author of "Natural Theology," "Evidences of Christianity," and other popular works. When Pitt, as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the age of twenty-three, revisited Cambridge, where he had graduated, Paley marked with a sarcastic eye how assiduously some of the leading members of the University courted the youthful Prime Minister, and made up to him in view of the good things which he would now have at his disposal. It was Paley's turn

to preach before the University at St. Mary's on the Sunday following Pitt's visit; accordingly, he took for his text: "There is a *lad* here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes," adding, as he looked round on the crowded church, "But what are they among so *many*?"

A most unfortunate result followed the selection of a text in the Chapel Royal at Dublin. Dr. Sheridan, the father of the better-known Richard Brinsley Sheridan, was asked by a country clergyman to take the duty for him on the next Sunday. Sheridan was in high favour at Dublin Castle, but he unconsciously forfeited all by his text on the occasion. He took an old sermon of which the text was, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Unfortunately, it happened (which Sheridan had forgotten) to be the anniversary of the accession of the House of Hanover. The supposed insult to the Irish Court was never forgiven, and it is said lost the Doctor his

bishopric. The Irish Government could not have bestowed one of its mitres on a head capable of such an application of the text. I remember hearing an anecdote connected with texts, which was related of the eccentric minister of Montrose, Mr. Mollison, of whom many traditional stories were current in my recollection. A widow had a house, in which she resided and to which she was much attached, close by the old parish church; the Provost and Town Council wanted her to give it up to facilitate some plans of borough improvements. She obstinately resisted all solicitations, and Mr. Mollison took her part, and defended her against her powerful opponents. The Corporation, however, were in the end, either by Act of Parliament or decree of Court, too strong for her, and accordingly proceeded to remove the house by violent means. Mr. Mollison, to show his indignation at such conduct, on the Sunday after the work of destruction had begun, gave out as his text,

Prov. xiv. 1 : "Every wise woman buildeth her house, but a fool pulleth it down." We have heard instances of very curious applications of Scripture passages as texts. In the year 1816, when the whole country was struck with sorrow and dismay at the unexpected death of the Princess Charlotte of Wales, no pulpit in the land failed to expatiate upon the sad and awful character of the visitation, or to commemorate the virtues of the departed princess. Of course, many appropriate texts were chosen ; but the congregation of an eminent divine were greatly surprised when the preacher gave out the text : "Take this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." But his meaning evidently was, that if a character such as Jezebel was, should be properly buried, simply on account of her *royal birth*, what honour should not be paid to one who was at once so virtuous and so beloved. Sometimes *one word* has been selected for a text, and that an insignificant one. Bishop Andrews and his con-

temporaries are rather fond of eliciting a great depth of meaning from one comparatively unimportant word. Thus, a very devotional writer of the time of James I., William Austin, has left a sermon for St. Bartholomew's Day (although, by-the-by, he was a layman), on the words "*and Bartholomew.*" He points out how the name of this Apostle never occurs in Scripture except when preceded by the copulative particle "and." He deduces from this fact the general Christian duty and advantage of our giving each other mutual help and kindly assistance, and he evolves this doctrine entirely from this use made by the sacred writers of the word "*and.*" But we have heard of a preacher of this class meeting with a repartee of an equally ingenious character with his own sermon. He was a candidate for a lectureship, and had to deliver a discourse before the trustees of the endowment, in the way of competition; so he was determined to show how clever he could be, and took for his text the

single word "*but*." He deduced from thence the great truth and the important doctrine that no position is without some corresponding cross or opposite trial. Naaman was a mighty man of valour and honourable, *but* he was a leper. The five cities of the plain were fruitful as the garden of Eden, *but* the men of Sodom were awful sinners. The inhabitants of Ai put the Israelites to flight, *but* they wist not of the liers in wait behind the city. I called you, *but* ye answered not. Come, for all things are ready, *but* they would not come: and so on. When the clerical competitor came down to the vestry, the senior trustee of the lectureship met him, and politely remarked—"Sir, you gave us a most ingenious discourse, and we are much obliged to you; *but* we don't think you are the preacher that will do for us."

II. After this treatise on texts, as springing from the fact of the earliest sermons having *no* texts, we proceed now to the second class of preachers which we have marked on our

list—viz., the preachers who followed those of the scriptural era—what may be properly denominated the patristic preaching—sermons of the early Fathers. And here I would remind my readers that this involves no consideration of the authority of the Fathers, either in regard to furnishing arguments for theological doctrine, or in regard to authority for ecclesiastical polity. Our inquiries do not enter upon the question of their value or their defects. They neither involve the theory of the Oxford High Church school, viz., that all religious opinions must be tried and tested at the bar of patristic judgment; nor do they seek to corroborate the conclusion of Courayer, and of the author of the “Natural History of Enthusiasm,” viz., that the study of the Fathers is a mistake—that their opinions are often unscriptural, their judgment unsound. All we have to look to is the *pulpit* of the early Church—the preaching of the Fathers, and not their theology. And in this

notice of an era of preachers, our task is much simplified—our work is rendered comparatively easy, because we find that for this class one name stands out pre-eminent amongst patristic preachers. There is one pulpit orator who assumes the position of *the* great and brilliant type or representative of the patristic pulpit. He was to be known to the Christian world under a name supplied by the felicity of the Greek language—Chrysostom, or golden-mouthed—and which expressed the rich and rare qualities of his matchless eloquence.

There were, no doubt, others in the early Church of great name as preachers. In the Eastern Church, before Chrysostom, were Basil and the two Gregories. But of the three, Basil was the greatest. Cyril of Jerusalem is celebrated, but he will be reckoned quiet and prosy. Ephraim the Syrian is called, by a friend whose knowledge of these matters is rare as his judgment is profound, the Dr. Guthrie of the Eastern Church. It is this Ephraim who wrote

“Metrical Homilies, Sermons in Verse,”—a question I take up in my second Lecture. In the Latin, or Western Church, Ambrose, the famous Bishop of Milan, was an eloquent and graceful preacher: Augustine admired him; but it was rather for his diction, his “*suavitas sermonis*,” than for his power. Of Augustine himself, we unhesitatingly say he was the greatest writer of the early Christian Church. He was great, too, as a preacher. Some of his sermons in his works are excellent. But the Archbishop of Constantinople is *the* preacher of the early Church.

The *history* of John Chrysostom is a remarkable incident in the history of the Church. Born at Antioch, of a noble and opulent family, he had acquired such early distinction, that in the year 374, when quite young, he was chosen to be a bishop. The election, however, drove him to the desert from the haunts of men, where he acquired those habits of seclusion and austere piety which

ever after influenced his character. After going through for six years a course of the most severe discipline, he returned to Antioch, and having exercised his ministry in his native city for eighteen years with great influence and extended reputation, he was chosen, without solicitation and even against his consent, to the see of Constantinople. To that elevated position (esteemed the second in the Christian world) he carried with him two qualities which influenced his future course, and marked the current of his life and history. The fervour of his eloquence drew forth universal admiration, whilst the severity of his monastic virtue was perpetually making enemies in the upper ranks of society. He spared no one in his severe animadversions against worldly-mindedness and vice. He did not confine his censures to his lay hearers, but attacked ecclesiastics in high places. In his visitation through the Asiatic provinces of his arch-episcopate, he deposed thirteen bishops,

and passed severe censure upon the whole order. His powerful eloquence was poured forth against all classes of society. He spared neither the clergy, the nobility, nor the court, and the Empress Eudoxia took deadly offence at his personal attacks and animadversions. She twice used her utmost endeavours to displace the archbishop. A celebrated sermon, after this persecution, commenced, it is said, with these words, in reference to Eudoxia:—"Herodias is again factious; Herodias again dances; she once again requires the head of John Baptist:" "an insolent allusion," says Gibbon, "which, as a woman and a sovereign, it was equally impossible for her to forgive." After a disturbed reign of six years, his enemies procured his banishment, and he ended his days in an obscure and desolate place among the ridges of Mount Taurus. But his exile was a glorious one. His virtues were universally respected, and after his death his name was enrolled amongst the saints of

the Church, the most honoured and the most distinguished. His remains were conveyed with great pomp and veneration to Constantinople. They were received on the way by the Emperor Theodosius, who fell prostrate on the coffin, and implored, in the name of his guilty parents, Arcadius and Eudoxia, the forgiveness of the injured saint, whose banishment from the arch-episcopate they had procured.

These circumstances in the personal history of Chrysostom it is important we should mention, as they bear upon the only question with which we are now concerned—viz., his eloquence, the effects of which must have been transcendent. His language is certainly not the pure Attic Greek of Basil or Gregory Nazianzen, but it is elevated, flowing, and perspicuous. The *doctrines* of Chrysostom may have been tinged with that ascetic spirit which he had imbibed in his solitary dwelling among the ridges of Mount Taurus—a spirit which became afterwards developed in the

whole monastic system of Rome and its celibacy with many extravagances. The opinion of Chrysostom might have been uncertain and undecided on some points connected with the eucharist, grace, original sin, and confession. With these matters we have no concern. We look to him as the orator of antiquity; as the great preacher of the Christian Church, the most distinguished of his day; and the natural qualities of his mind, the energy and fearless nature of his character, his bold front against vice in high places, rendered him peculiarly suited for the elevated position in which he was placed. The works that remain of Chrysostom are almost exclusively sermons or homilies. They amount in number to nearly 1,000, and therefore we have abundant means of judging the powers of this great preacher, and of the subjects which he chose for his addresses. These discourses are often very like modern sermons, and in fact, with small alteration, might be adapted to

modern pulpits. The sermons of Chrysostom are now more accessible to the public since the publication of the "Library of the Fathers," in which are contained between 200 and 300 of his sermons translated into clear vernacular and intelligible English. I intend to close this Lecture by reading a few extracts from these discourses. But you must, of course, bear in mind under what great disadvantages you hear them now. Besides the knowledge of ancient preaching, we learn from passages in these sermons some curious information regarding practices in the Ancient Church which have escaped the knowledge of the historian. For example, we find it was the custom in church to *applaud* passages in sermons, and to make demonstrations of approval or disapproval, as if the audience were in a public theatre. We find Chrysostom referring to the circumstance in a sermon on Rom. xvi. 17; and he beautifully contrasts the honour of such empty demonstrations of approval with the more glorious

offering of their hearts and their own good conduct. "Let us then lay all these things to heart, and not be contented with passing mere praises upon them, but let us even accomplish what I have been speaking of. For what is the good of these applauses and clamours? I demand one thing only of you, and that is the display of them in real action—the obedience of deeds. This is my praise; this your gain. This gives me more lustre than a diadem. When you have left the church, then, *this* is the crown that you will make for me and for you, through the hand of the poor; that both in the present life we may be nourished with a goodly hope, and after we have departed to the life to come, we may attain to those good things without number, to which may all of us attain by the grace and love toward man," &c.

I have mentioned the hostility which Chrysostom drew upon himself, by his plain speaking, from the Empress Eudoxia; and certainly

we find, from the following opening of one of his sermons, that he was not sparing in his general animadversions upon female shortcomings, independent of the personal attacks he had made upon the Empress and her conduct. And I think we must allow that the behaviour of the ladies of Constantinople in church makes the animadversions of Chrysostom very reasonable, although pretty sharply expressed. All through his sermons we find reference to their unseemly conduct in church; but in that upon 1st Tim. ii. 11, he is specially severe. He says—"In the Apostles' time women kept *silence* from teaching, but now there is apt to be great noise amongst them, much clamour and talking, and nowhere so much," he adds, strange as it seems, "as in this place"—that is, in church. "They may all be seen here talking more than in the market or at the bath; for, as if they came hither for recreation, they all are engaged conversing upon unprofitable subjects. Thus all

is confusion; and they seem not to understand, that unless they are quiet they cannot learn anything that is useful. For when our discourse strains against the talking, and no one minds what is said, what good can it do to them? To such a degree should women be silent, that they are not allowed to speak, not only about worldly matters, but not even about spiritual things in the church. This is order; this is modesty; this will adorn her more than any garments. Thus clothed she will be able to offer her prayers in the manner most becoming."

Chrysostom not unfrequently illustrates his subject by an anecdote. Thus to show how selfish men may become, and how insensible in their covetousness to everything but their own interests, he narrates the following story: "A drought once overtook our city, and all were trembling for the last of evils, and were beseeching God to rid them of this fear. And one might see then that which was spoken of

by Moses ; the heavens became brass, and a death, of all deaths the most horrible, waited for every day. But afterwards, when it seemed good to the merciful God, beyond all expectation there was wafted down from heaven a great and plentiful rain. And thenceforth all were in holiday and feasting, as having come up from the very gates of death. But in the midst of so great blessings, and the common gladness of all, one of these exceeding wealthy people, with a gloomy and downcast countenance, went about quite dead with sorrow ; and when many inquired the reason wherefore in the common joy of all men he alone is sorrowful, he could not even keep within him this savage passion ; but goaded by the tyranny of the disease, he declared before them all the reason, ‘Why,’ saith he, ‘having in my possession ten thousand measures of wheat, I have no means of disposing of them left.’”

Again, in a homily on Rom. vi. 5, he contrasts beautifully the greater advantage in men adorn-

ing their souls over any adorning that can be laid out on their earthly habitations. "When thou adornest thy soul, men and angels, and the Lord of angels, will weave thee a crown. And so if thou art in love with glory stand aloof from the things which thou art now doing, and show thy taste, not in thy house, but on thy soul, that thou mayest become brilliant and conspicuous. For now nothing can be more cheap than thou art, with thy soul unfurnished, and but the handsomeness of thy house for a screen."

Mark the conclusion of a sermon where he closes with urging the necessity of faith and sound doctrine:—"Now, as we know this, let us with all kindness receive the mother of all blessings, *faith*, that sailing as it were in a still harbour, we may at once keep our *doctrines* orthodox, and by steering our life safely in a straight course, may attain those eternal blessings by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the

Father glory, and strength, and honour, and adoration, with the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.”

Then, again, although full and clear upon the necessity of faith for men to be saved by Christ, how earnest is the following exhortation to his hearers that they should amend their conduct, and lead moral and holy *lives*:—
“Wherefore I entreat and beseech, and lay hold of your very knees, that whilst we have this scant viaticum of life you would be pricked in your hearts by what has been said; that you would become better men; that we may not, like that rich man, lament to no purpose in that world after our departure, and continue thenceforth in incurable wailings. For though thou shouldst have father, or son, or friend, or anysoever who have confidence towards God, none of these shall ever deliver thee, thine own works having destroyed thee. For such is that tribunal, it judges by our actions alone, and in no other way is it possible there to be saved.”

How earnestly, how affectionately does he beseech men to come to Christ, by all that He has done for them! "For He was not satisfied even with death and the cross only, but He took up with becoming poor also, and a stranger, and a beggar, and naked, and with being thrown into prison, and undergoing sickness, that so at least He might call thee off. If those will not requite me, He says, as having suffered for thee, show mercy on me for my poverty. And if those are not minded to pity me for my poverty, do for my disease be moved, and for my imprisonment be softened. And if even these things make thee not charitable, for the easiness of the request comply with me."

Now, you are to remember (as I have hinted) the vast disadvantage at which the words of the golden-mouthed preacher are heard on such an occasion as the present. Here you have had tamely read to you, and clothed in the dress of an ordinary English

translation, what Chrysostom delivered in person from an archiepiscopal or patriarchal throne, the second of the Christian world in dignity and power; the speaker a man endowed with high and splendid natural gifts; his language the language of Demosthenes, full, resounding, and glorious even in its decline; his hearers the greatest and most distinguished in the land. His sentences were received by all with the most intense anxiety; for he spoke of all and to all with equal boldness, from the throne to the humblest dwelling—watched by his admirers with acclamations of delight, caught at by his enemies that they might turn them to his ruin. The subjects of his addresses are frequently connected with questions on which the minds of his hearers were divided with bitter and implacable party spirit. One circumstance connected with the preaching of St. Chrysostom should ever be recorded to his immortal honour—I mean his constant and never-ceasing zealous efforts for the practical

piety, the moral improvement, and spiritual advancement of his flock. Whatever was his subject, however earnest his zeal, whatever bitterness or severity he might throw into his sermons, one object alone filled his mind and animated his efforts, and that the noblest object to which the genius of man can be directed. He was ever anxious to give practical reality to the faith of others. The desire of his heart was to purify the morals and to advance the virtue of those whom he could influence. I cannot, I think, better conclude this Lecture, and this imperfect sketch of, perhaps, the most distinguished preacher of the Church, than in the glowing words of the historian of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," who certainly would have no undue bias towards a bishop of the Church, or to any one, as a preacher of Christianity. After an elaborate history of his life, in which he eloquently describes his dauntless career as a governor of the Church,

Gibbon thus sums up the character of John Chrysostom as a *preacher* :—“The monuments of that eloquence which was admired near twenty years at Antioch and Constantinople, have been carefully preserved ; and the possession of near 1,000 sermons or homilies has authorised the critics of succeeding times to appreciate the genuine merit of Chrysostom. They unanimously attribute to the Christian orator the free command of an elegant and copious language ; the judgment to conceal the advantages which he derived from the knowledge of rhetoric and philosophy ; an inexhaustible fund of metaphors and similitudes, of ideas and images, to vary and illustrate the most familiar topics ; the happy art of engaging the passions in the service of virtue, and of exposing the folly as well as the turpitude of vice, almost with the truth and spirit of a dramatic representation.”



SECOND LECTURE.

BEFORE I commence my second Lecture, I wish to mention that since the first Lecture was delivered, I have received letters from the country, from persons who have expressed a kind interest in our subject, and who, although strangers to myself, have suggested anecdotes illustrative of the various topics which have been taken up in reference to "Preaching and Preachers." One anecdote I cannot resist repeating, as it bears so directly upon one of our divisions of the last Lecture—viz., upon that of sleeping in church. My correspondent is a grandson of the late Rev. James Bonnar, of Auchtermuchty, of the Relief Kirk, who was eminent as a preacher, and noted in his day for some of those little eccen-

tricies which have disappeared from our modern pulpits. He was one day preaching at Kettle, in Fife, for his friend the Relief minister thereof. It was a very warm day ; the church closely packed ; the occasion, the Monday following Communion. He observed, with some annoyance, many of the congregation nodding and sleeping in their pews whilst he was preaching ; he took his measures accordingly, and introduced the word “hyperbolic” into his sermon ; but he paused, and said, “Now, my friends, some of you may not understand this word hyperbolic—I’ll explain it. Suppose that I were to say that this congregation were *all* asleep in this church at the present time, I would be speaking hyperbolically ; because (looking round) I don’t believe much more than one-half of you are sleeping.” The effect was instantaneous, and those who were nodding recovered themselves and nudged their sleeping neighbours, and the preacher went on as if nothing had happened.

The class of preachers of whom we are next to give some account, according to our third division, is the *MEDIÆVAL PREACHERS*—that is preachers who flourished in the middle ages, and who followed the writers say of the fifth or sixth centuries; a class of preachers including a large number of divines, of whose works some portions have been translated and published, but of which many remain in MS., deposited in our great libraries. A few of these mediæval names are as follows:—Bede, generally called Venerable Bede, the historian of the Anglo-Saxon Church; Anselm, one of the most learned men of his age; Abelard, immortalised by Pope; Peter of Blois, died Archdeacon of London; Thomas à Kempis, known throughout the world; Guarric of Igniac; Hildebert, Archbishop of Tours. We may name also Anthony of Padua, esteemed one of the most effective of the middle age preachers. Indeed, his popularity and success as a preacher was so great, that when he preached

he was sometimes, like our Whitefield, obliged to preach in the open air. At such times 30,000 people would attend and hang upon his words. Shops were shut, and the effects of his appeals are said to have been marvellous in producing repentance and conviction of sin amongst his hearers. No doubt many persons will be surprised to hear of such effects of mediæval preaching, and to find the eloquence and power of preachers described in terms much like the description of preachers of our own day. But if any one would desire an acquaintance with the real nature of mediæval preaching, a copious selection from their sermons may be procured at a small price, in a volume published in 1856 by Dr. Neale, "Neale's Mediæval Sermons." I cannot express my obligation for what I have gained from Dr. Neale's volume for this portion of my subject.

No doubt, a very common opinion prevailed that mediæval preaching can only be a mass

of ignorance, superstition, and error ; that the light of Divine truth being then so obscured, we cannot expect to find even any glimmering of it in the preaching of the age ; that, in short, it would only be a waste of time to examine such productions, and that no benefit could arise from their perusal. Now, I must fairly and at once acknowledge that the acquaintance I have made with mediæval preaching does not bear out the usually unfavourable judgment so often formed of it. Do not mistake me. I am quite aware of the religious shortcomings and grievous errors of that dark period for the Christian Church. I know how the light of Gospel truth was obscured ; I know how many inconsistencies and unscriptural notions shaded the whole period, and how glorious a light shone forth at the Reformation ; but I think the pulpit was before the age, and that the mediæval pulpit bore testimony against many errors and corruptions of the mediæval times themselves. I cannot too often remind

my readers that these lectures are to treat of preaching merely *as* preaching; they consider men exclusively as pulpit orators, not as divines; we mark their eloquence and not their theology. A great deal of mediæval preaching is searching, scriptural, and faithful. I have already given you a specimen of its power and minuteness in the extract from Bede upon the subject of the punishment of the lost. Need we wonder at finding in the mediæval pulpit *something* beautiful and complete when we remember that to those ages we are indebted for our glorious Gothic architecture? What more perfect, more beautiful in itself, than Gothic architecture? that is, from the reign of William the Conqueror to the reign of Henry VII. As the dark ages closed it declined, and at the Reformation had become quite debased.

But to consider the matter a little more in detail. There is a quality which remarkably distinguishes mediæval preaching, and which must have, at any rate, a tendency constantly

at work to keep the preacher right. Some of my hearers will be surprised when I name the abundance of reference to Scripture. Take as an example (and not an exceptional one) the sermons of Guarric of Igniac; they are *imbued* with Scripture. Indeed, Dr. Neale, whose work on mediæval preaching I have referred to, makes a curious comparison between Guarric and John Newton on this very point of Scripture reference. He selects John Newton as a type of the modern evangelical class of preachers. He compares two sermons on the same subject and the same text, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord"—one by Newton, and one by Guarric. In Newton's sermon he finds nine references to the Gospels, two to the Epistles, nine to the Prophets, one to the Psalms, while no mention is made to any other part of Holy Scripture. In the sermon of Guarric he finds seven references to the Gospels, one to the Epistles, twenty-two to the Psalms, nine to the Prophets, and eighteen to other parts of

Scripture. Thus the total number of quotations made by the evangelical preacher is twenty-one, by Guarric fifty-seven, and this in sermons of nearly equal length. The best way to get an idea of mediæval sermons would be through a little volume lately published, and called "Spiritual Voices from the Middle Ages." They are short extracts from mediæval authors, and really will be found a most valuable collection of holy thoughts. I can only give one. It is from Hildebert, whom I have already named. He was made Archbishop of Tours in 1185, at seventy years of age. It is from a sermon entitled "Crosses and Sufferings." It is a fair specimen of the general run of the whole volume, and I think everyone must admit that it is a happy application of a scriptural metaphor, and that the use made of it by the author carries with it a lesson of a touching and a sacred character:—
"The love of the world in its commencement is sweet, but in the end bitter; the love of God

at first appears bitter, but in the end it becomes sweet. This is proved to us in a remarkable manner by the Evangelist's account of the marriage feast at Cana, where it is said, 'Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.' The natural man first imbibes the good wine—that is to say, he is dazzled by the deceitful sweetness of earthly pleasures; when these false desires have made him drunken, then must he drink the bad—conscience and its sting approaches. But Jesus keeps the good wine until the end. Will He satisfy a soul with His love, he first permits it to undergo sorrow and suffering, that the gracious draught may be so much the more refreshing and the sweeter." (Hildebert.)

I have named as a mediæval preacher, Peter of Blois (Petrus Blessensus), so called from his place of birth. He was Archdeacon of London, and in the exercise of his archidiaconal

office he had to address, or, as it is usually termed, to *charge*, his clergy. And faithfully and boldly does he attack the clerical vices of the age, and most fearlessly does he rebuke the wicked priest. In a passage, which I quote because it is most characteristic of his style, he says—"Oh, how awful, how perilous a thing, my brethren, is the administration of your office! because ye shall have to answer, not only for your own souls, but for the souls committed to your charge, when the day of tremendous judgment shall come! And how shall he keep *another* man's conscience, whose own is not kept? Oh! there is a fire kindled in the fury of the Lord, and it shall burn even to the nethermost hell. A place is appointed for him with everlasting burnings; the worm is prepared which dieth not; smoke, vapour, and the vehemence of storms—horror and a deep shade—the weight of chains of repentance that bind, that burn and that consume not! From which may that Fire deliver us who consumes

not, but consummates ; which devours not, but enlightens every man that cometh into the world ! May He illuminate us to give the knowledge of salvation unto His people, who liveth and reigneth ever with the Father and the Holy Ghost, God to all ages of ages."

I must say that this bold and faithful mode of ecclesiastics in authority treating in the middle ages with the shortcomings of their brethren in the ministry, contrasts favourably with a case of modern times recorded of a visitation discourse preached before Bishop North, of Winchester—a dark and dead time for the Church of England, certainly, and a time when the trumpet of the Christian ministry too often gave a very feeble or very uncertain sound. An incumbent of the diocese was to preach before the assembled clergy, when he chose for his subject the "Existence of a God." Some of his brethren, after the meeting, expressed some surprise at the subject he had chosen, and hinted that he might have found a

more edifying topic before such an audience than to enter into the proof of a truth so elementary as the existence of a God. He must have been somewhat of a humourist from his answer. "Why," said he, "to tell you the truth, it was the only subject of which I could think where I was sure not to have a difference of opinion."

There is a quality by which the pulpit of the mediæval period is distinguished, and that is, a prevalence of an oddity, quaintness, or eccentricity—nay, even sometimes of what may be termed a degree of *jocular*ity. I mean in some preachers—for many mediæval preachers are uniformly grave and dignified. In all ages of the Church this characteristic has appeared at times in the sermons of her ministers; not I think apparent in the preaching of the more early preachers. It broke out in the middle ages, and has ever since formed a topic for men's amusement. I have in the first lecture, under the head of "Dulness in Sermons," given you some specimens of quaint *commencements* by preachers

for the purpose of exciting the more lively attention of their hearers; but we now are dealing rather with that which certainly seems an extraordinary ingredient of a sermon—I mean a display of the preacher's wit or humour. I dare say the case of the late Rowland Hill occurs to the minds of many of my hearers as a preacher whose discourses were often distinguished in a remarkable degree by oddity and humour. When preaching at Wapping, a district on the Thames of which the people have always been lax in their moral conduct and religious observances, he pressed upon them the freeness of the offer of pardon and of mercy. He assured them of grace being shown to the worst of sinners. Indeed, as he told them, even such *Wapping* sinners as they were might hope to be forgiven. This is pretty well matched by the mode in which a mediæval preacher enforced the lesson of a teaching Church and a learning people. He showed how ministers were to work vigorously, and how the people

were quietly to attend; and he does so well and powerfully. But we can hardly avoid smiling when he quotes in illustration of this great truth, Job i. 14—"The oxen were plowing, and the *asses* feeding beside them."

Take another specimen of Rowland Hill's oddity. In his time a practice had become fashionable of ladies wearing high, showy head-dresses, called "top-knots." Preaching to a congregation where he wished to discourage this unseemly and vain display, as he considered it—the practice had become common amongst some farmers' daughters, and annoyed Mr. Hill—so he gave out for his text Matthew xxiv. 17—"Let him that is on the house-top not come down;" and then he pointed out how there was a prohibition of such head gear in the words "Top-knot come down!" The writings of Anthony of Padua, a mediæval preacher whom I have already named, may be set against this fanciful use of scriptural language in Rowland Hill. He is full of it. Thus, with much in-

genuity, he points to unexpected comparisons. He compares penitents to elephants. He compares apostles to ichneumons, hypocrites to hyenas, merciful men to cranes, and sinners he compares to hedgehogs. The humour, or wit, or even buffoonery of the pulpit is a very curious question in the history of preaching. In the middle ages, much use was made of this unseemly element, joined, however, with much that was sound and awakening and beautiful. Some preachers there were who introduced allusions sometimes so gross, and sometimes so grotesque, that one wonders how they could be tolerated at a time when so much was heard from the pulpits cotemporary with this, that was serious, scriptural, and solemn. But this jocular style seems to have been considered a legitimate part of the preacher's office, and was, in fact, reduced to a system. It was called Barlettanding ("ars Barlettandi") from a preacher, Gabriel Barlatti, who was celebrated for it. To those of my readers who

are unacquainted with the circumstance, it must seem a very strange feature of early preaching that any sermons should have been written in *verse*; and yet such appears to have been the case, as far back as the fourth century, by Ephraim the Syrian. The notion is too extraordinary to be realised. Fancy hearing a sermon in the present time preached in verse. A little book, or rather a thin volume; quarto, of English metrical homilies in rhyme, from a MS. of the fourteenth century, was published in Edinburgh in 1862, by Mr. Fraser, Princes Street, and edited by the learned librarian of our university, Mr. Small, collated with MSS. of the same kind in Oxford and Cambridge. They seem to have been frequently preached to congregations before the Reformation, especially in the north. With much that is objectionable and absurd, they contain a great deal of instruction and remonstrance that are sound and scriptural. The language of the fourteenth century is,

of course, very difficult for persons to follow who are not used to read the old English or old Scotch. These metrical sermons are, I am told, purer Saxon than Chaucer, and in fact do not differ much from the Scotch of Barbour and Wynton. As I cannot clearly make them out myself, it is not likely I should make them very intelligible to my hearers, and therefore I leave this curious volume to the study of anyone who may wish to examine it. The volume was reviewed in the *British Quarterly Review* of 1862 by my esteemed friend Dr. Lindsay Alexander, and you will not be surprised, therefore, when I add that the review is at once comprehensive, learned, and candid.

I am unwilling to pass by this part of my subject without an attempt, at least, to give you some idea of this curious volume of metrical sermons. I will take a few lines where the preacher describes three advents of Christ; and I will give the extract the more

readily because I can avail myself of the reviewer's verbal explanations of the more unusual Saxon words :—

“ Now se ye qui and for quas sake,
 Crist com til us our kind* to take ;
 His fust com was bodilye,
 Bot an other est gastilye†.
 That es quen Crist gifes us wille,
 His commandmenz to fulfille ;
 For son quen me haf wil to do,
 Al that the preacheour says us to—
 And feles our heart in charite,
 In sothe‡ ful siker may we be.
 That Crist is comen in til our hertes
 Gastli, that us til goodness ertes,§
 Of us self haf we noht bot sin,
 Bot quen Crist wirkes us wit in,
 Than at the fust beginne, we
 God cresten men for to be.

* * * *

Now haf ye herd twifald to com,
 The thred sal be on day of dom,
 Quen we sal ris throue blast of bem,||
 And Crist sal cum al fole to dem.¶
 Til good men sal he be queem,**
 And to the wik ful grisli†† seem :

* Nature.

† Spiritual.

‡ In truth.

§ Induces, inclines.

|| Trumpet

¶ Judge

** Agreeable, gracious

German, bequem.

†† Terrible.

Forthi red and we al pray,
 That he be til us quem* that day,
 And bring til his mikel blis,
 That til rightwis† men graithed es.‡
 Amen say we al samen, §
 Than his joy and endless gawen.”||

I would conclude this notice of an extraordinary mediæval work with the reviewer's striking remark:—"While the recurrence of superstitious and unwholesome representations disfigures these homilies, it is pleasant to remark that the prevailing tone of the teaching which they exhibit is sound and scriptural. Of the grace, condescension, and saving power of our Lord, and of the need of faith in him, and repentance towards God for salvation, their authors speak strongly, frequently, and clearly. Most faithful and pointed, also, are their rebukes of evil-doers, without respect of persons, and most earnest their calls to righteousness and virtue. It is worthy also of note, that no attempt is made to exalt the

* Prepared.

† Righteous.

‡ Prepared.

§ Together.

German, Zusammen.

|| Pleasure.

priesthood, or to persuade men to confide their salvation to priestly offices; while of a tendency to Papal homage and subordination there is hardly a trace."

The division of our subject which comes next in order after mediæval preaching, is the preaching of the Reformation period. Those were stirring times, and called forth men's keenest feelings, and tested the sincerity of men's professions. The pulpit was, of course, a main instrument both in attacks upon the Romish supremacy and in its defences. What an instrument did the pulpit become in such hands as those of Luther, Calvin, Knox, Latimer, Ridley, and others! With these men, there was this difference between them and ordinary preachers. When *they* preached, they proclaimed truths which they knew might cost them their life or their liberty; and with many, what they uttered in the pulpit with their lips, they sealed on the scaffold with their blood.

I must be brief on this portion of our subject, but I have selected as examples portions of the preaching of Latimer, our own reformer and martyr. Latimer's is a charming character—a joyous, indeed we may say a *jolly*, character. “There may be other reformers,” says Principal Tulloch, “that more engage our admiration; there is no one that more excites our love.” His sermons partake of his own nature, and to this day are full of point, and are great favourites with all that take interest in them to read them, notwithstanding their quaint old English. In one of his sermons he speaks thus of Satan's delusions:—“Oh, that a man might have the contemplation of hell! That the devill would allow a man to looke into hell, to see the state of it, as he shewed all the worlde when he tempted Christe in the wilderness. But I say if one were admitted to view hell thus, and behold it thorowelie, the devill would say, on yonder syde are punished unpreaching prelates;

I think a man should see as far as a kenning, and see nothing but unpreaching prelates. He might look as far as Calice, I warrant you. And then if he would go on the other side, and shew where the bribing judges were, I thinke hee should see so many, that there were scant rume for any other; but Lord amend it." He again attacks unpreaching prelates, and tells them to go and learn diligence from the devil.

The subject of "unpreaching prelates," you will recollect, was a favourite theme with the "Reform" preachers. Latimer returns to it in the following quaint terms:—"But in the meantime the prelates take their pleasures. They are lords and no labourers; but the devill is diligent at *his* plough. *He* is no unpreaching prelate. *He* is no lordly loyterer from his cure, but a busy ploughman, so that among all the prelates, and among all the packe of them that have cure, the devill shall go for my money. For he still applyeth his busyness. Therefore,

ye unpreaching prelates, learne of the devill to be diligent in doing of your office. Learne of the devill; and if you will not learne of God nor good men, for shame learne of the devill”

He often turns upon the ladies, and attacks their abominations in dress. “What was *her* swadlyng cloth wherein holy Mary layed the Kyng of heaven and earth? No doubt it was poor gere; peradventure it was her kercheefe which she tooke from her head, or such like gere; for I thinke Mary had not much fine gere. She was not trimmed up as our women are now-a-dayes. I thinke, indede, Mary had never a vardyngalle; for she used no such superfluties, as our fine damsells do now-a-dayes, for in the olde tyme women were content with honest and single garmentes. Now they have found out these round-aboutes; they were not invented then—the devill was not so cunnyng to make such gere, he found it out afterwarde. Therefore Mary had it not. I will say this, and yet not judge other bodyes

hartes, but only speake after dayly appearaunce and experience. No doubt it was nothing but a token of fayre pride to weare such vardyn-galles, and I therefore thinke that every godly woman should set them aside."

What Master Latimer meant by the ladies' round-aboutes, which he attributes to Satan's inventions, and how far, if they have such, they would take his advice after 300 years "to set them aside," I leave to the ingenuity of my lady readers.

The next division of our subject is the preachers of the Puritan age—the school of divines who, at the Reformation, adopted for forms of Church government the Presbyterian or Independent, and for doctrine a more rigid adherence to the Calvinistic theology. I must pass over this division, as I have not time for examples. But I would add my feeble testimony to the worth of the many great names whom it includes, as, for example, Owen, Howe, Baxter, and others of the school. They must

always class as men of eminence and of power in the Christian Church. Perhaps nothing has tended more to dissociate the sympathies of men generally from the Puritan preachers, than the uncompromising *length* of their discourses. Some minds are sorely tried when a preacher comes to say: "And now, to be brief, I would observe, eighteenthly, so and so will prove—"

The section of our subject which embraces the preachers of the Church of England is indeed sufficiently comprehensive in itself to occupy many lectures. What a number of great names rise up before us at the mention of this section of the Christian Church! What a variety of styles, what a diversity of power, what a fund of learning, of acuteness, and of zeal; may be suggested by the very mention of the Anglican pulpit! What a fund of learned discourses and of sound reasoning is comprised in the Bampton Lectures alone! What clear-headed, shrewd, and even witty discourses are

supplied by such men as South! What accurate moral analysis by such men as Barrow! What sound scriptural exposition by such men as Lightfoot and Horsley! What elegant practical instruction by such men as Tillotson, Sherlock, and others! And what learning, beauty, and grace do we find in England's favourite preacher and divine, Jeremy Taylor! His writings, especially his sermons — his "Holy Living and Holy Dying" — are too well known to require that I should give specimens. Indeed, he is an author of whom detached passages do not at all convey an adequate idea. He requires to be studied, and his whole tone of mind and thought to be entered into. I may quote a short passage as being eminently characteristic of Taylor's style:—

“Every sinner that repents causes joy to Christ, and the joy is so great that it runs over and wets the fair brows and beauteous locks of Cherubim and Seraphim, and all the angels have a part of that banquet; then it is that

our blessed Lord feels the fruits of His holy death, the acceptation of His holy sacrifice, the graciousness of His person, the return of His prayers."

Taylor is a character to be loved; and whilst we admire, nay, whilst we reverence, the high powers and qualities of a mind so majestic and so piercing as that of Richard Hooker—whilst we contemplate with wonder the copious diction, the inexhaustible faculty of illustration and analysis in Isaac Barrow, we think of the matchless eloquence and winning words of Jeremy Taylor with affection and delight. Taylor has been styled the Shakespeare of theology; and the comparison is due to his exuberant imagination, and the charm which, like Shakespeare, he throws over the most ordinary topics by the play of his rich fancy, and the graceful selection of epithets and similes which he employs for his illustrations. Taylor was one of the most learned of our divines. I have always thought, how-

ever, that learning, and the deference he paid to learning, formed Taylor's greatest drawback and impediment. Learning was to him more of a master than a handmaid. He trusted without hesitancy, and without reflection or examination, to its authority, and occasionally we find him laboriously giving us the opinion of some obscure author, when we wish to have his own. He seemed to receive implicitly every word and statement which he has ever read in *any* patristic or classic author. Thus he is led sometimes by his trust in contending authorities to maintain inconsistent opinions, and defends a sophistry and doubtful opinion by following the speculations of others. I am quite ready to admit that all this makes him sometimes tiresome and fatiguing; but take him in his own thoughts and his own language, he is always charming. In Taylor personally we seem to have a combination of the simplicity of a child acting on the eloquence of a seraph.

Of Hooker's style of preaching we have few specimens. His works which we possess contain only five sermons, of which the first, entitled "A Learned Discourse on Justification," would be of an enormous length. The style, I fear, would be considered now as somewhat heavy, and the mode of argument as learned rather than as popular. Indeed, although there are fine passages, great part of these celebrated and able discourses would hardly keep up the attention of a modern congregation. I will quote the conclusion of the sermon on the "Certainty and Perpetuity of Faith in the Elect;" and I quote it as one of the grandest specimens of Anglican sermon eloquence. It is indeed a noble passage—graceful in diction, sound, elevating, and touching in its pastoral instruction:—"It was not the meaning of our Lord and Saviour, in saying 'Father, keep them in Thy name,' that we should be careless to keep ourselves. To our own safety, our own sedulity is required. And then, blessed for ever and

ever be that mother's child whose faith hath made him the child of God. The earth may shake, the pillars of the world may tremble under us, the countenance of heaven may be appalled, the sun lose his light, the moon her beauty, the stars their glory; but concerning the man that trusteth in God, if the fire have proclaimed itself unable as much as to singe a hair of his head—if lions, beasts ravenous by nature, and keen with hunger, being set to devour, have, as it were, religiously adored the very flesh of the faithful man, what is there in the world that shall change his heart, overthrow his faith, alter his affection towards God, or the affection of God to him? If I be of this note, who shall make a separation between me and my God? 'Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No; I am persuaded that neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword, nor death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,

nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall ever prevail so far over me.' 'I know in whom I have believed.' I am not ignorant whose precious blood hath been shed for me; I have a Shepherd full of kindness, full of care, and full of power; unto Him I commit myself; His own finger hath engraven this sentence in the tables of my heart—'Satan hath desired to winnow thee as wheat, but I have prayed that thy faith fail not,'—therefore, the assurance of my hope I will labour to keep as a jewel, unto the end; and by labour, through the gracious mediation of His prayer, I shall keep it."

The three great names of the older school of Anglican theology are Hooker, Barrow, and Taylor. Of these three writes Bishop Heber (himself no mean associate) in this eloquent passage, which concludes his *Life of Taylor*:—
"Of such a triumvirate, who shall settle the precedence? Yet it may, perhaps, be not far

from the truth to observe that Hooker claims the foremost rank in sustained and classic dignity of style, in political and pragmatistical wisdom ; that to Barrow the praise must be assigned of the closest and clearest views, and of a taste the most controlled and chastened ; but that in imagination, in interest, in that which more properly and exclusively deserves the name of genius, Taylor is to be placed before either. The first awes most, the second convinces most, the third persuades and delights most ; and (according to the decision of one whose own rank among the ornaments of English literature yet remains to be determined by posterity) Hooker is the object of our reverence, Barrow of our admiration, and Jeremy Taylor of our love.*

The French or Gallican pulpit, like the English, is a most comprehensive subject. What names arise before us when we speak of

* Ωκηρον μὲν σεζω θαυμαζωδε Βάρουον, καὶ φιλῶ Ταίλω ρον.—
Note to Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon.

French preachers! Among Roman Catholic divines we have Fénelon, Pascal, Bourdaloue, Massillon, Bossuet; amongst Protestants, Claude, Saurin, Daillé, Superville. The sermons of Massillon and Bourdaloue are finished and masterly specimens of pulpit oratory. Massillon is perhaps the more elegant and more abounding in beautiful passages; but in his clear divisions, and lucid exposition, and powerful application of his text, Bourdaloue is one of the first of preachers. Still I believe the funeral orations of Bossuet are the highest and the finest specimens of French pulpit oratory. Indeed, they are unsurpassed in solemn earnestness of tone, and in that grave dignity which becomes the praise and admiration in the house of God of departed greatness. Indeed, these are perhaps unequalled by any human compositions. It is related of Robert Hall, that after reading the "Oraisons Funèbres" of Bossuet, he wrote in the margin of his copy, "I never expect to *hear* language like this till I hear it

from the lips of seraphs round the throne of God." I had prepared with great care, by the aid of a friend well versed in the French language, some extracts from the funeral oration on Henrietta Maria, Queen of England, and daughter of Henry IV. of France; and on Louis of Bourbon, Prince of Condé. But I find that no translation, however skilfully done, gives the force or beauty of the original. To the original, therefore, I must refer you.

As one of the most favourable specimens of his class—I mean the class of *modern* French preachers of the Romish Church—I would mention Lacordaire, lately deceased, whose works were published in 1861. Lacordaire was the most popular preacher who has been heard since the time of Massillon. Whenever he was announced to preach at Notre Dame, we are told,* the cathedral was surrounded, long before the doors were open, by an immense and

* See *Contemporary Review*, May, 1868.

heterogeneous crowd. Before he appeared in the pulpit, the vast naves, the aisles, and the side chapels were thronged with statesmen and journalists, members of the Academy, and tradesmen, working men, and high-born women, sceptics, socialists, devout Catholics, and resolute Protestants, who were all compelled to surrender themselves for the time to the irresistible torrent of his eloquence. The Archbishop of Paris, who seems to have been a timid and cautious man, and who, in 1834, had interdicted Lacordaire from continuing his Conferences in the College Stanislas, and who hesitated very much about offering him the pulpit at Notre Dame, was swept away at last by the universal enthusiasm; and at the close of the Conferences of 1835-36, rising from his archiepiscopal throne, he hailed the preacher before all Paris as "the new prophet." And yet his discourses, as published in 1861, have been declared by a French critic to be "unreadable." If this were true, it would only

supply an additional illustration of what has often been remarked—viz., that composition for effective oratory is very different to composition for interesting perusal. Lacordaire seems to have been a striking example of a man born with what we may call the pulpit oratorical temperament, which takes fire before an audience. He always quoted with great delight the words of Cicero, “Non est magnus orator sine multitudine audiente.” In his correspondence with Madame Swetchine, he tells her, “It is impossible for me to speak alone.” Lacordaire never wrote his sermons; he jotted down a few notes, and trusted to the inspiration of the moment. Hence his discourses are very unequal—indeed, singularly uneven—and sometimes there are extravagant metaphors which a more deliberate judgment would have regretted. But he was a great preacher, and produced effects upon his hearers such as only can be produced by fervid eloquence. The following expansion of our Lord’s commission

to His Apostles has often been quoted as a specimen of the free and sweeping style of thought and language :—"Go, teach all nations. Fear neither the difficulties of foreign tongues, nor the differences of manners, nor the power of secular governments. Consult not the course of rivers nor the direction of mountain-ranges: go straight on. Go as the thunder of Him who sends you—as the creative Word went, which carried life into chaos—as the eagles go, and the angels."

Of Nonconformist preachers, the name of George Whitefield at once presents itself as most prominent and most popular. The effects of his eloquence are described as quite marvellous. We read of his preaching in the open air to 30,000 persons, to each one of whom he was perfectly audible. Nay, more, we have heard that during one of these sermons a wall on which many hundred persons were sitting fell down, and so enraptured were the audience that the circumstance caused not the slightest

disturbance or interruption. But Whitefield's style was exclusively for preaching. His power is lost in the reading. The printed discourses give you no idea of the effect when preached, as I am informed. I have never seen them. But I remember a traditionary anecdote in the west of England of a *tour de force* made use of by the orator in these out-of-doors addresses, and which he had often repeated. In preaching upon the discipline and self-denial of the saved, he wished to represent to his hearers that to secure this end they must enter the strait gate and pursue the narrow way; that salvation was not to be won except with labour and self-denial, adding, "You seem to think it a very simple matter; you think it quite easy. Oh, just as easy as for me to catch that insect flying past me (grasping at a fly or supposed fly). Then, after a little pause, he opened his hand, saying, in solemn tones, 'But I have missed it!'"

The name of Wesley naturally becomes

associated in our minds with that of Whitefield. They are constantly named together, but on the points of Election and Free-will they differ *toto cælo*, as the Calvinist differs from the Armenian. Wesley's is now the greater name. The followers of John Wesley in England, America, and the Colonies, are now counted by millions; and many of his printed discourses are able and powerful sermons. One sermon is indeed celebrated. It is an attack upon the extreme Calvinistic doctrine of Election and Reprobation. Southey, in his Life of Wesley, has declared that it is one of the "finest examples of impassioned eloquence in the language." I am not concerned now with the correctness or incorrectness of the theology: I am only concerned with John Wesley's *statement* of it.

"This doctrine," he says, "represents our blessed Lord, Jesus Christ the righteous, the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth, as a hypocrite, a deceiver of the

people, a man void of common sincerity; for it cannot be denied that He everywhere speaks as if He were *willing* that all men should be saved. You represent Him as mocking His helpless creatures, by offering what He never intends to give. You describe Him as saying one thing and meaning another; as pretending the love which He had not. Him in whose mouth was no guile, you make full of deceit, void of common sincerity. When nigh the city, He wept over it, and said, ‘Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!’ Now, if you say *they* would, but *He* would not, you represent Him—which, who could hear?—as weeping crocodile’s tears, weeping over the prey which Himself had doomed to destruction. Oh, how would the enemy of God and man rejoice to hear these things were so! How would he cry aloud and spare not! How would he lift

up his voice and say, 'To your tents, oh Israel! Flee from the face of this God, or ye shall utterly perish!'" How far the argument against the high Calvinistic views which is contained in such representations as these, contains an argument which is answerable or not, we do not now inquire; but most assuredly it is eloquent and powerful declamation.

The name of Robert Hall is, no doubt, familiar to many of those who may read these specimens of "Table-Talk." Hall was a Nonconformist, and the son of a Nonconformist; an English Baptist of the class denominated General Baptists, to distinguish them from those called Particular Baptists, who held a narrower and more confined view of Christian communion. Hall was a splendid writer of English; his sermons contain passages of majestic eloquence, which seem to partake a good deal of the character of Edmund Burke and of Samuel Johnson. I have already referred to Hall's manner of getting up his

sermons; they were not written—they were not, in the proper sense of the term, at all extempore. They seem to have been built up in his own mind, and formed there complete both as to argument and as to diction, and thus were poured forth to his hearers. Hall suffered during a period of mental aberration, and was for a time under restraint. Before that period he had a chapel at Cambridge; and his sermons were often listened to by gowmsmen, who filled his aisles. On his recovery he went to Leicester, and was known for years as Hall of Leicester. He then went to Bristol, where he died. It is said that he never had the same power and eloquence after his confinement. Indeed, I have been told by an intimate friend of Sedgwick that he heard him say he had at Cambridge, before that retirement, listened to Hall till he seemed to hear the words of one who belonged to an order of superior intelligence. If such a man as Sedgwick were thus affected by the pulpit

addresses of Robert Hall, we need not be surprised to hear of the deep impression produced on his ordinary hearers. The following account of the effects of his preaching is taken from Dr. O. Gregory's Memoir:—

“Mr. Hall began with hesitation, and often in a very low and feeble voice. As he proceeded, his manner became easy, graceful, and at last highly impassioned; his voice also acquired more flexibility, body, and sweetness; and in all his happier and more successful efforts, swelled into a stream of the most touching and impressive melody. The further he advanced, the more spontaneous, natural, and free from labour, seemed the progression of thought. . . . In his sublimer strains not only was every faculty of the soul enkindled and in entire operation, but his very features seemed fully to sympathise with the spirit, and to give out, nay, to *throw* out, thought and sentiment and feeling.” . . .

“Mr. Foster, in referring to Mr. Hall's

earlier efforts, before age and almost continual pain had abated the energy and splendour of his eloquence, records that "his intense ardour of emotion and utterance often animated to the extreme emphasis a train of sentiments impressive by their intrinsic force, and which, as he delivered them, held dominion over every faculty of thought and feeling in a large assembly."

I have great pleasure in referring my readers to a most interesting notice of Robert Hall, in a delightful volume entitled "An Autumn Dream," third edition, 1867, pages 83, 84, 85, 186—188. The author, my esteemed and valued friend of fifty years, Mr. John Sheppard, of Frome, has written "Thoughts Preparatory to Devotion," and other works of deep and sacred thought. Hall was of an independent spirit, and often winced under the control exercised or attempted to be exercised by English Dissenters over the preaching of their pastors. I had the following anecdote

from Dr. Chalmers:—A member of his flock, presuming on his weight and influence in the congregation, had called upon him and took him to task for not more frequently or more fully preaching *Predestination*, which he hoped would in future be more referred to. Hall, the most moderate and cautious of men on this dark question, was very indignant; he looked steadily at his censor for a time, and replied: “Sir, I perceive that *you* are predestinated to be an ass; and what is more, I see that you are determined to ‘make your calling and election sure!’”

Hall, with his powerful and noble eloquence, comes before us now entirely as a preacher; he was not publicly distinguished in any other branch of sacred literature. A short extract or two from his discourses will elucidate the character of Hall's style—something like a combination of Addison, Burke, and Johnson. How gracefully, how appropriately, does his famous sermon on Infidelity open:—“As the Christian

ministry is established for the instruction of men throughout every age in truth and holiness, it must adapt itself to the ever-shifting scenes of the moral world, and stand ready to repel the attacks of impiety and error, under whatever form they may appear. The Church and the world form two societies, so distinct, and are governed by such opposite principles and maxims, that, as well from this contrariety as from the express warnings of Scripture, true Christians must look for a state of warfare; with this consoling assurance, that the Church, like the burning bush beheld by Moses in the land of Midian, may be encompassed with flames, but will never be consumed." He thus refers to the wickedness and folly of the Infidel Philosophers; more than all, their infatuated eagerness, their parricidal zeal to extinguish a sense of Deity, must excite astonishment and horror:—"Is the idea of an almighty and perfect ruler unfriendly to any passion which is consistent with innocence, or an obstruction to

any design which it is not shameful to avow? Eternal God, on what are thine enemies intent? What are those enterprises of guilt and horror that, for the safety of their performers, require to be enveloped in a darkness which the eye of heaven must not pierce? Miserable men! proud of being the offspring of chance; in love with universal disorder; whose happiness is involved in the belief of there being no witness to their designs, and who are at ease only because they suppose themselves inhabitants of a forsaken and fatherless world."

His celebrated sermon on the death of the Princess Charlotte thus describes the national feeling at the sad event:—"We fondly hoped that a life so inestimable would be protracted to a distant period, and that, after diffusing the blessings of a just and enlightened administration, and being surrounded by a numerous progeny, she would gradually, in a good old age, sink under the horizon amidst the embraces of her family and the benedictions of

her country. But alas ! these delightful visions are fled ; and what do we behold in their room but the funeral pall and shroud, a palace in mourning, a nation in tears, and the shadow of death settled over both like a cloud ! Oh, the unspeakable vanity of human hopes ! the incurable blindness of man to futurity !—ever doomed to grasp at shadows, to seize with avidity what turns to dust and ashes in his hands, ‘to sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.’”

There might here naturally be expected a notice of the American preachers. As might be supposed, America, from its phases of religious belief and profession, has produced names of Christian ministers highly distinguished as preachers and as writers of sermons. One, the name of Channing, seems to stand pre-eminent and distinguished. His sermons and his dissertations on Milton, Fénelon, &c., are well known in Europe, and have been highly praised in the *Quarterly Review*, and

favourably noticed in a masterly biography by Count de Remusat, one of the ablest French critics. His preaching is not marked, however, by the bold, impassioned, and copious eloquence by which American oratory, whether of the pulpit, the senate, or the bar, is usually distinguished. The style of Channing is carefully elaborated. He indicates the most refined and elegant taste. His sentiments express the purest emotions of Christian love and peace. His estimate of the Divine nature is lofty and devotional. I give a passage from one of his discourses:—

“What more do we need to bring back Eden’s happiness than Eden’s sinlessness? How light a burden would be life’s necessary ills, were they not aided by the crushing weight of our own and others’ faults and crimes! How fast would human woe vanish, were human selfishness, sensuality, injustice, pride, impiety, to yield to the pure and benign influences of Christian truth! How many of us know that

the sharpest pains we have ever suffered have been the wounds of pride, the paroxysms of passion, the stings of remorse!—and where this is not the case, who of us, if he were to know his own soul, would not see that the daily restlessness of life, the wearing uneasiness of the mind, which, as a whole, brings more suffering than acute pains, is altogether the result of undisciplined passions—of neglect or disobedience of God? But discontents and anxieties have their origin in moral evil. The lines of suffering on almost every human countenance have been deepened, if not traced there, by unfaithfulness to conscience, by departures from duty. To do wrong is the surest way to bring suffering; no wrong deed ever failed to bring it. Those sins which are followed by no palpable pain are yet terribly avenged, even in this life. They abridge our capacity of happiness, impair our relish for innocent pleasure, and increase our sensibility to suffering. They spoil us of the armour of a pure conscience

and of trust in God, without which we are naked amidst hosts of foes, and are vulnerable by all the changes of life. Thus, to do wrong is to inflict the surest injury on our *own* peace. No enemy can do us equal harm with what we do ourselves whenever or however we violate any moral or religious obligation."

I now come to a subject which I consider to be a very genial and interesting portion of the task involved in these Lectures. I have set down as our last division of pulpit orators, those of the modern *Scottish* school of deceased preachers, of whom the representatives are Thomas Chalmers and Edward Irving. Towards Chalmers I feel with a threefold interest. He was a Scotchman; he was a man of genius; and he was a personal friend. In 1850 I had the honour of reading a paper before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, on the character of Chalmers generally—as an author, as a political economist, and as an orator. We are now, of course, concerned only with his peculiarities as a

preacher; those peculiarities we shall examine, and attempt to analyse and elucidate.

Chalmers, as a pulpit orator, stands in the highest class of Christian preachers. He was essentially eloquent; I speak of him now as one who produced in his day effects upon men's minds the most striking and permanent. I quote from the paper I read on the character of Chalmers before the Royal Society of Edinburgh:—"If Chalmers were not eloquent, where, we may ask, is eloquence to be found? Judge by the effects upon men's minds, and say is not *that* eloquence which captivates and enchains the hearers? Is that not eloquence which delights all classes of mankind, all ages, all situations of life? Is not that eloquence which ensures an interest and admiration unbroken, and which to the last attend every appearance of the speaker in public? Nor was this attraction the result of art, or the mere artificial embellishments of oratory. It was not in graceful and studied

action; it was not in musical and practised intonation; it was not in the purity and beauty of the accent;—all these were plain, homely, to some hearers quite unmusical, and yet how extraordinary were the effects of his eloquence!”

One quality attaches itself very remarkably to the pulpit compositions of Chalmers. They abound in expression eminently imaginative. I never heard that he wrote poetry, properly so called, but certainly there is much of poetic diction in his style. This must be evident to the most cursory reader. It would be easy to adduce examples of *real poetry* from his sermons. I mean real poetical imagery and poetical diction. For example: in his sermon on Cruelty to Animals, and where he has to speak of the love of offspring in the lower animals, he thus describes the distress of the unreasoning mother who, in the language of Nature, laments the loss of offspring:—“The lioness robbed of her whelps causes the

wilderness to ring aloud with the proclamation of her wrongs; or the bird whose little household has been stolen, fills and saddens all the grove with melodies of deepest pathos." This appears to me essentially poetry. In that sermon on Cruelty to Animals, preached in consequence of an endowment, he has occasion to show that suffering is often inflicted on the inferior creatures by man, not for the purpose of torment, but that it follows whilst he is occupied with other occupations and excitements; and as an example, to illustrate the absence of any cruel *purpose* for the mere infliction of pain, he described in glowing colours the excitement and the interest of an English hunting-field, and he terms it "this favourite pastime of joyous old England, on which there sits a somewhat ancestral dignity and glory." And he describes the "assembled jockeyship of half a province," the assemblage "of gallant knighthood and hearty yeomen;" and he spake of "the autumnal clearness of

the sky," and "high-breathed coursers," and "the echoing horn;" "the glee and fervency of the chase;" "the deafening clamour of the hounds," and "the dying agonies of the fox," in such a strain of animation, that Lord Elcho's huntsman, who was present, declared that he had difficulty in restraining himself from getting up and giving a view-holloa.

In his funeral sermon on the late Dr. Andrew Thomson, he thus illustrates, in a very picturesque manner, the strength and sternness of his character in his public life, as it was relieved by the gentleness and kindness of his private household visitations:—
"This union is often exemplified in those Alpine wilds where beauty may at times be seen embosomed in the lap of grandeur; as when at the base of a lofty precipice some spot of verdure, or peaceful cottage-house, seems to smile in more intense loveliness because of the towering strength and magnificence which are behind it." In a very striking

sermon on the "Paternal Character of God," when drawing "the picture of moral and pleasing qualities of mind and affections, *apart* from the love of God, or from the influence of divine grace upon the soul," he adds this illustration: "There is beauty in the blush of a rose, and there is beauty of a higher character in the blush that mantles the cheek of modesty, and yet there may be just as little of loyalty to God in the living as in the inanimate object."

But another quality which pervades all his discourses is not, perhaps, so obvious. Chalmers always keeps in view some one great principle or moral sentiment, sometimes of a very profound and original character; and however varied be his illustration, however exuberant in imagery, this object is constantly the key-note to the whole course of his remarks. Hence Robert Hall, the eminent Nonconformist divine, said—not, I fear, in a very kindly spirit—"The mind of Chalmers moved not on

wheels, but on hinges." By which he meant to express how Chalmers kept close to the one leading idea of the discourse, bringing the many different arguments and the ever-varying illustrations to bear upon that point, rather than introducing his hearers to a variety of questions, and laying before them a succession of new ideas. No one can have an idea of the effect of Chalmers's preaching from merely reading his sermons, beautiful as they often are. His sermons should be heard in the Chalmerian tone. He composed everything with a view to his own delivery, and I am convinced that this is the reason of his frequent *alliterations*. These alliterations are a peculiarity of his style, and seemed to fall in with the cadence or rhythm of his own elocution. It seems with him a kind of fancy, as when he puts words together thus:—"The weight of authority and allurements;" "A right and reasonable use;" "A sweet and softening lustre;" "The mark and the movements of

God's administrations ;" "The doings and the deliberations of the sanctuary ;" "The perishing of a strayed and solitary world ;" "The attributes of God in all their might and manifestations." These are merely specimens or samples gathered from a few pages.

Those who never heard Chalmers, or who indistinctly recollect his manner, should hear a passage read by some one from a sermon of his, *somewhat* in the manner of his own delivery, and especially in reference to the manner of his cadence or accentuation. Take, for example, that beautiful and characteristic passage from the second of his Astronomical Sermons, and which, in fact, contains the pith and substance of the whole argument—viz., that it is not inconsistent with the greatness of the Deity, or the magnificence of His creation, that the work of incarnation and atonement should have been transacted on so small and so obscure a field of action as this earth must be considered, when compared to the whole creation of God.

Chalmers shows that, in the case of a mighty *earthly* monarch, a lasting honour might be won by kindness and condescension shown to some obscure and humble family; and that such a display of magnanimity and of kindness might create a deeper reverence and admiration than the renown of all his public achievements: and he makes this an analogous case to the goodness of God in visiting with grace and mercy the inhabitants of *our* world, which, in comparison with the greatness of creation, is an humble and obscure planet in the immensity of space. When these Lectures were delivered, I endeavoured to give something of Chalmerian effect to a very Chalmerian passage. It is as follows:—"In like manner did the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, surrounded as He is with the splendours of a wide and everlasting monarchy, turn Him to our humble habitation; and the footsteps of God manifest in the flesh have been on the narrow spot of ground we occupy. And small though our

mansion be amid the orbs and the systems of immensity, hither hath the King of Glory bent His mysterious way, and entered the tabernacle of men ; and in the disguise of a servant did he sojourn for years under the roof which canopies our obscure and solitary world ! Yes, it is but a twinkling atom in the peopled infinity of worlds that are around it ! But look to the moral grandeur of the transaction, and not to the material extent of the field upon which it was executed ; and from the retirement of our dwelling-place there may issue forth such a display of the Godhead as will circulate the glories of His name amongst all His worshippers. Here sin entered. Here was the kind and unwearied beneficence of a father repaid by the ingratitude of a whole family. Here the law of God was dishonoured, and that, too, in the face of its proclaimed and unalterable sanctions. Here the mighty contest of the attributes was ended ; and when justice put forth its demands, and truth called

for the fulfilment of its warnings, and the immutability of God would not recede by a single iota from any one of its positions, and all the severities he ever uttered against the children of iniquity seemed to gather into one cloud of threatening vengeance on the tenement that held us, did the visit of the only-begotten Son chase away all these obstacles to the triumph of mercy; and humble as the tenement may be—deeply shaded in the obscurity of insignificance as it is among the statelier mansions which are on every side of it, yet will the recall of its exiled family never be forgotten, and the illustration given here of the mingled grace and majesty of God will never lose its place among the themes and the acclamations of eternity!” Of a far different character was the scene he drew in the conclusion of a sermon preached for the benefit of a Society in aid of Orphan Children of Clergymen. He described the sons and daughters of a Scottish pastor obliged, at their father’s

death, to leave the peacefulness of their father's dwelling; and he appealed to his hearers for their assistance in behalf of those who were so friendless and so dependent. "With quietness on all the hills, and with every field glowing in the pride and luxury of vegetation—when summer was throwing its rich garment over this goodly scene of magnificence and glory, they think, in the bitterness of their souls, that this is the last summer which they shall ever witness smiling on the scene which all the ties of habit and affection have endeared to them; and when this thought, melancholy as it is, is lost and overborne in the far darker melancholy of a father torn from their embrace, and a helpless family left to find their way, unprotected and alone, through the lowering futurity of this earthly pilgrimage." I heard that sermon, and the tears of the *father* and the preacher fell like rain-drops on the manuscript.

Before, however, I close with Chalmers, I

would not refuse myself the gratification of bringing forward another extract of what I really think is one of the most beautiful passages of pulpit eloquence in our language. I think it not only exhibits most happily the imaginative power of Chalmers in illustrating and expanding his main argument, but I am persuaded that his doctrine contained in it—the doctrine of a new affection being the only medium by which you can displace from the human heart its deep-grained love of the world—is most powerfully set forth; that men are brought to relinquish *bad* objects, by setting forth *divine* objects as something more worthy of attachment; that, in fact, men only resign an old affection by making an exchange for a new one. In his illustration of this reasoning, he supposes the case of a person standing on the margin of our world, where he sees on one side a bright field of beauty and abundance, but on the other side—that is, beyond the verge of the world on which he stands—he discerns

nothing but a dark, cheerless, unfathomable unknown. He clings to the happy, bright scenes which he sees before him. He shrinks from the desolation beyond it. Then the preacher goes on to suppose this further illustration :—

“ But if, during the time of his contemplation, some happy island of the blest had floated by, and there had burst upon his senses the light of its surpassing glories, and its sounds of sweeter melody; and he clearly saw that *there* a purer beauty rested upon every field, and a more heartfelt joy spread itself among all the families; and he could discern there a peace and a piety and a benevolence which put a moral gladness into every bosom, and united the whole society in one rejoicing sympathy with each other, and with the beneficent Father of them all;—could he further see that pain and mortality were there unknown, and, above all, that signals of welcome were hung out, and an avenue of communication was made for him;

perceive you not, that what was before the wilderness would become the land of invitation, and that now the world would be the wilderness? What unpeopled space could not do, can be done by space teeming with beatific scenes and beatific society; and let the existing tendencies of the heart be what they may to the scene that is near and visibly around us, still if *another* stood revealed to the prospect of man, either through the channel of faith or through the channel of his senses, then, without violence done to the constitution of his moral nature, may he die unto the present world, and live to the lovelier world that stands in the distance away from it."

There was a circumstance connected with Chalmers's preaching which I wish to mention, both as a personal matter connected with himself, and as bearing upon the general question of popular pulpit addresses. Though a very frequent preacher, he had *very few* sermons—very few, indeed, besides his printed ones.

The consequence was that he preached his sermons often over. I heard him preach his beautiful sermon on the love of God in the parish church of Haddington, and on my expressing my pleasure at having been present, he said, "I felt rather uncomfortable, for I saw a gentleman present who must have been hearing it for the fourth time." And yet he never failed in energy or in fervency of manner in the delivery. When Chalmers was over an old worn MS. of a sermon which he had often repeated, his whole spirit seemed to go forth, as if it were preached the first time, and preached under all the excitement of a first and extempore effusion. He was too original and too characteristic to preach anything which had not been completely moulded and thought out according to his own conceptions. His time was much occupied otherwise, and it was well known he never preached what he had not previously carefully prepared, so that people were quite satisfied to know the

sermon. Amongst the great orators of the French pulpit this was quite an understood thing, and crowds flocked to hear Massillon, and Bossuet, and Bourdaloe on the great festivals of the Church, knowing the sermon which they were to hear, just as people would go to the representation of *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*. I must say I think there is too great jealousy about hearing old sermons again. I suspect that most great preachers have had few sermons. The old Scottish phrase to describe such repetitions is "Cauld kail het again;" and yet the "cauld kail" may, like old wine, be the best. When I lived in Somersetshire (where I had a curacy seven years), a clergyman came to a neighbouring parish to assist a brother curate who was from home. Unfortunately, he preached a sermon by an author to whom his absent friend was very partial, and whose sermons had often been heard in that church. So, on going out, a farmer accosted the stranger clergyman, saying to him in the Somerset

dialect, "La, sir, I ha' gotten thik sarmon by heart." "Have you?" said the detected preacher, quite coolly, and without any defence or explanation, "it's more than I have." But another clergyman, under similar circumstances, acted with more address, turning the tables upon his accuser, and putting *him* in the wrong. After preaching, a farmer accosted him in the churchyard as he thought with a crushing accusation, "La, sir, I ha' gotten thik sarmon at huom on a shelf." The curate attacked the poor man and made him slink off more discomfited than triumphant. "So, sir, you tell me you have got that sermon in your house! Remember your responsibility. *That* sermon which you have now heard in church, you have on a shelf! Go home, sir, and study it well, and be a wiser and a better man when I return to this place!"

With the name of Chalmers we naturally join the name of Irving. They form the two leading features of Scottish pulpit eloquence of our day; and though there may be points of

resemblance, there are many points wherein they differ greatly in the tone and character of their eloquence. Irving came from Glasgow to London in 1822. At Glasgow he had never been distinguished for pulpit oratory, and perhaps as the colleague of Chalmers it was difficult for any one to achieve celebrity as a preacher, or to attract attention which was so riveted upon the brilliant and powerful talents which seemed to throw all others into the shade. The representations of those who, seeing in the eccentric assistant the future orator, induced him to remove to London, were more than realised. The popularity of the Scottish Presbyterian minister at the Non-conformist Chapel in Hatton Garden exceeded, I believe, anything on record. It attracted all classes of society, and it was long sustained. The crowds were immense. The first men in the country—statesmen, men of literature, and men of science—were deeply interested and waited till they could get a

seat. The highest testimony was given to the power and the accomplishment of the orator, by persons not of the preacher's communion. I will read the curious account of Irving's popularity in connection with two great men, from the first volume of Mrs. Oliphant's most interesting *Life of Irving*, published in 1862 :—

“The immediate origin of Irving's popularity, or rather of the flood of noble and fashionable hearers who poured in upon the little chapel in Hatton Garden all at once, without warning or premonition, is said to be a speech of Canning's. Sir James Mackintosh had been by some unexpected circumstance led to attend the new preacher, and he heard Irving in his prayer describe an unknown family of orphans belonging to the obscure congregation as now ‘thrown upon the fatherhood of God.’ The words seized upon the mind of the philosopher, and he repeated them to Canning, who, as Mackintosh relates, after expressing

great admiration of the passage, made an instant engagement to accompany his friend to the Scotch Church on the following Sunday. Shortly after this had taken place, a discussion arose in the House of Commons in which the revenues of the Church were referred to, and the necessary mercantile relation between high talent and good pay insisted upon. No doubt it suited the statesman's purpose to instance on the other side of the question the little Caledonian chapel and its new preacher. Canning told the House that so far from universal was this rule, that he himself had lately heard a Scotch minister, trained in one of the most poorly endowed of churches, and established in one of her outlying dependencies, possessed of no endowment at all, preach the most eloquent sermon that he had ever listened to. The curiosity awakened by this speech is said to have been the first beginning of that invasion of 'society' which startled Hatton Garden out of itself."

After a time this feeling of admiration declined. Dark days fell upon the life of the popular pulpit orator. His enthusiastic adoption of certain peculiar views on the interpretation of prophecy, and his advocating the reality of spiritual gifts of an extraordinary character, as exercised by certain individuals, alienated many of his friends. His views, or supposed views, on the human nature of our Lord brought him under the censure of his own Church courts, and ultimately caused his deposition. He died crushed in spirit and broken-hearted. These incidents of Irving's life, touching and interesting as they must be to all who have read Mrs. Oliphant's Life, are not, however, now before us. Our concern is with the man as a preacher, and in that capacity Irving's claims have been brought forward by the publication of his Life, and of six volumes of his pulpit discourses, in addition to the former volumes, his orations, and his later days; and he has again taken in public estimation

the highest place. Take merely such testimony as the following.

The *Saturday Review*, generally severe enough in its judgments, thus writes of their power and their reality:—"Irving, almost alone among recent men, lived his sermons and preached his life. His words, more than those of any other modern speaker, were life passed through the fire of thought. He said out his inmost heart, and this it is that makes his writings read like a prolonged and ideal biography."

The *English Churchman* says:—"It was time that one who cannot be forgotten should possess some worthy monument; and nothing more fitting could be built up for him than these memorials of his genius."

The *Patriot* speaks of Irving's writings as "the noble contributions to the thought and goodness of his generation of a great, gifted, and godly soul."

Blackwood's Magazine declared of Irving,

“he was the greatest preacher the world has seen since Apostolic times.”

The *Times*, in a very elaborate critical article, said of Irving:—“With all his faults, there is about him a sublimity as of the old prophets—a tenderness, too, and a refinement mixed up with all his brilliance, that take the reader and the hearer captive. We have had in this century no lack of the highest eloquence, whether spoken or written; but assuredly no man’s eloquence in our century has surpassed that of Edward Irving, and, what is very rare, it is eloquence that will bear to be read: it is not less potent and seductive on the printed page than when it fell on listening ears.”

These pulpit remains of Edward Irving are, no doubt, a beautiful and magnificent addition to our theological literature. There is a selection from the larger work of six volumes, condensed into one, so that anyone can easily form a judgment for himself on his powers and

his merits as a preacher. My own opinion is, that Irving was a truly great preacher; that his style of writing was essentially adapted to effective delivery in the pulpit; and that his discourses, as we now have them, contain passages of great power, of beautiful composition, of matchless eloquence.

I would now select a few specimens of Irving's oratory, but would remind you how much they must lose in wanting his peculiar and terribly earnest enunciation, his magnificent voice, his clear intonation, his grand bearing.

In a sermon on the words of the Baptist, "Oh, generation of vipers," &c., he beautifully contrasts the relative position of John to his hearers with his own:—"It doth not become me, who have been educated in the softness of civilised life, to affect the rough and scornful language so becoming in the son of Zacharias; and though this country has been disgraced by martyrdoms of the Lord's servants no less than

Israel was, still, as by the singular providence of God upon the liberties of the land, we are not likely again to be troubled with such inhuman spectacles, I shall not use the reproachful language of the Baptist, and salute ye a generation of vipers ; but I will not fear to salute ye a cold-hearted generation, who are not moved as ye should be by the overtures of God. Else why this standing upon the porch of salvation, and never entering in ? Why feel conviction, and never obey ? Why admire saintliness, and not seek it ? Why weary of the world, and not rise unto the world to come ? Why apprehend death, and not think of it ? Why foresee judgment, and not prepare for it ? Why shudder at doom, and not flee from the wrath to come ? Oh ! flee from the wrath to come, for you are often warned. Already the axe is laid to the root of the trees, and they are falling fruitless into the fire unquenchable.”

Irving is very great on the character and

spiritual experiences of David. He says:—
“The force of his character was vast, and the scope of his life was immense. His harp was full-stringed, and every angel of joy and of sorrow swept over the chords as he passed; but the melody always breathed of heaven. And such oceans of affection lay within his breast as could not always slumber in their calmness; for the hearts of a hundred men strove and struggled together within the narrow continent of his single heart. And will the scornful men have no sympathy for one so conditioned, but scorn him because he ruled not with constant quietness the unruly host of divers natures which dwelt within his single soul?”

The last of my examples of pulpit oratory will be an extract from a sermon of Irving's on charity. I quote the passage, not only as eminently illustrative of the style and manner of Irving himself, but as containing what I consider to be the most powerful appeal with which I am acquainted, made to a Christian

congregation in urging contributions to an application on behalf of the poor, and for relieving their distress: "And here a fancy cometh upon my brain which I dare hardly utter, lest it overwhelm the feeling of this assembly, and unman myself into unbecoming weeping. I fancy in some sad abode of this city, some unvisited pallet of straw, a man, a Christian man, pining, perishing without an attendant, looking his last upon nakedness and misery, feeling his last in the pangs of hunger and thirst. The righteous spirit of the man being disembodied, I fancy it, to myself, arising to heaven encircled by an attendance of celestial spirits, daughters of mercy, who waited upon his soul when mankind deserted his body. This attended spirit I fancy rising to the habitation of God, and reporting in the righteous ear of the Governor of the earth how it fared with him amidst all the extravagance and outlay of this city. And saith the indignant Governor of men, 'They had not a morsel of bread nor a

drop of water to bestow upon My saint. Who of My angels will go for Me where I shall send? Go, thou angel of famine; break the growing ear with thy wing, and let mildew feed upon their meal. Go, thou angel of the plague, and shake thy wings once more over the devoted city. Go, thou angel of fire, and consume all the neighbourhood where My saint suffered, unheeded and unpitied. Burn it; and let its flame not quench till their pavilions are a heap of smouldering ashes.”

I have now rapidly described some leading points of the great subject on which I had engaged to lecture. The subject is in itself well calculated to bring before the mind of every serious inquirer many important and many interesting questions, which directly bear upon the present well-being and future happiness of mankind. The pulpit is of great importance as one of the principal channels of communication between the clergy and the people. Many hearers receive impres-

sions from the pulpit ministrations of men to whom they have otherwise little access—with whom they have otherwise little contact or communication. By the power and influence of words, mind bears upon mind; and who can estimate the full influence of that which, like an electric medium, can flash between man and man? Eloquence at the bar and in the senate have, in all ages, produced effects both permanent and impressive. The more chastened eloquence of the pulpit has had its triumphs and its accomplished orators; and although, as might be expected from such variety of tastes, talents, and acquirements as are employed in the office of preaching, much that is wearisome, conventional, and commonplace has flowed from the lips of preachers, still we feel justified in the assertion that on the whole the pulpit has ably sustained the cause of Christian truth, and that the written and spoken compositions of the Christian ministry form a bulwark of argu-

ment, a treasury of exposition, and a power of exhortation against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, over which the allurements of the vicious and the sophistry of the sceptic will never ultimately succeed. In all discussions and in all reasonings on the subject of preaching and preachers, we must ever bear in mind how closely connected it is with hearing and hearers; that these are correlative duties. If there be a duty incumbent on the ministry to *preach* right, it is an equal and correlative duty on the part of the people to *hear* right. Without, then, turning this Lecture into a homily to explain and impress the duty of Christian congregations living under the privileges of a preached Gospel, I may, in taking leave, remind every one who attends upon a Christian ministry, that the great end and object of that attendance is not to criticise, but to *learn*: that it were a wiser and a more generous policy for hearers to mark in *all* preaching whatever is useful, and what may be turned to

good account, rather than to discover in the preacher what is faulty in judgment or inelegant in taste. "Judge not the preacher," says an old quaint writer, "for the sermon may condemn thee." The office of the preacher will be discharged under circumstances very different from each other. Sermons will vary much in language, in style, and in ability; but there are certain qualities which should be found in *all* sermons, and certain qualities which should be *excluded* from all. There should always be gravity, sincerity, simplicity, earnestness, and truth. There never should be affectation, buffoonery, or self-conceit. There never should be the vanity which would sacrifice propriety to popularity. Men will have their favourite preachers—men will have their own ideas of what are the finest sermons. But the essential elements of the true Christian orator have been already drawn by the hand of a master. And therefore, in closing these remarks, I would wish to leave

upon the minds of all my readers an impression of a description by Cowper the poet of the preacher, whom he beautifully describes as

“ A messenger of grace to guilty man.”

The passage to which I refer occurs in the second book of his poem, “The Task,” published in 1785 :—

“ Would I describe a preacher such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master strokes, and draw from his design ;
I would express him simple, grave, sincere ;
In doctrine uncorrupt ; in language plain,
And plain in manner ; decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture ; much impress'd
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too ; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty man.”



INDEX.



A.		
	PAGE	
Abelard	82	Cosin, Bishop
Andrews, Bishop	59	Crabbe.
Anselm	82	
Anthony of Padua	82, 93	D.
Austin, William	60	Dalhousie, Marquis of
B.		
Balwhidder	29	
Barlatti, Gabriel.	94	F.
Barrow, Isaac	23	Foster, John
Bede	25, 39, 82	
Bentley, Dr. Richard	15	G.
Blair	23	Gladstone, William.
Bonnar, Rev. James	80	Gordon, Dr. R.
Butler, Bishop	13	Guarric of Igniac 82, 86, 87
C.		
Caird, Dr.	52	Guthrie, Dr.
Chalmers, Dr. Thomas	6,	
	14, 31, 131	H.
Channing	127	Hall, Robert
Chrysostom, St.	64	Henry, Dr.
Clarke	54	Hildebert, Archbp.
		Hooker
		Horsley, Bishop
		I.
		Irving, Edward

J.		PAGE	R.		PAGE
Jortin		23	Ramsay, Lord		35
K.			Rowland Hill		92, 93
Keekie		29	S.		
L.			Secker		23
Latimer		100	Sheridan, Dr.		57
M.			Sherlock, Bishop		12, 21
Macknight		16	Simeon, Rev. Charles		32
Massillon		55	Smith, Sydney		49
Mollison		58	Sprose		29
N.			Sterne		49
Neale, Dr.	43, 55, 83,	86	Stillingfleet		20
Newton, John		86	Swift, Dean		46
P.			T.		
Paley		56	Taylor, Bishop		105
Pastorini		25	Thomas à Kempis		82
Peter of Blois.		82	W.		
			Waikle		29
			Wesley		45, 118
			Whitefield, G.		25, 116
			Wilberforce		34

THE SECOND VOLUME

OF

The Belle Saubage Library

IS

THE SEARCH FOR
THE GRAL.

BY JULIA GODDARD.

Price 3s. 6d.

Now ready. Third Edition, 8vo, cloth, 5s.

GREAT SERMONS OF THE
GREAT PREACHERS,

Ancient and Modern.

WITH AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE GREEK AND
LATIN PULPIT.

CASSELL, PETTER, AND GALPIN,
LONDON AND NEW YORK.

PURGATORY AND PARADISE.

ILLUSTRATED BY DORÉ.

ENGLISH EDITION, £2 10s.

Messrs. CASSELL, PETTER, and GALPIN have the pleasure to announce that they have in active preparation the English Edition of the PURGATORIO and PARADISO, Illustrated by GUSTAVE DORÉ, uniform with the magnificent English Edition of DANTE'S "INFERNO."

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THE
CASSELL DORÉ VOLUMES,
NOW READY.

- CASSELL'S DORÉ BIBLE. £8.
CASSELL'S DORÉ MILTON. £5.
CASSELL'S DORÉ DANTE'S INFERNO. £2 10s.
CASSELL'S DORÉ ATALA. £2 2s.
CASSELL'S DORÉ DON QUIXOTE. £1 10s.
CASSELL'S DORÉ LA FONTAINE. £1 10s.
CASSELL'S DORÉ FAIRY REALM. £1 1s.
CASSELL'S DORÉ CROQUEMITAINE. £1 1s.
CASSELL'S DORÉ MUNCHAUSEN. £1 1s.
CASSELL'S DORÉ WANDERING JEW. 15s.
-

The "SATURDAY REVIEW" says, "Messrs. Cassell have devoted themselves to the work of giving the English bookbuyer Gustave Doré, in all the profusion of his prodigal pencil. This year, at any rate, may be pronounced to be the Doré year. We resist the too obvious solicitations of a sorry joke, but we hope it will be a golden year to those enterprising publishers, who send us the 'Bible' with Doré illustrations, 'Dante' with Doré illustrations, 'Paradise Lost,' 'Don Quixote,' 'Munchausen,' 'The Wandering Jew'—all from the same dashing and vigorous artist. Here are six most sumptuous volumes, all handsomely printed, and with paper and type 'de luxe,' and all from the same artist and entrepreneur. They may be proud of each other."

CASSELL, PETTER, AND GALPIN,
LONDON AND NEW YORK.

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01030 0970