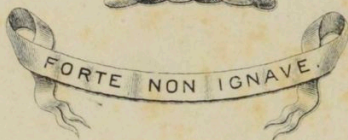


The image shows the front cover of a book. The main part of the cover is decorated with a traditional marbled paper pattern, featuring swirling, organic shapes in shades of deep red, dark blue, and ochre yellow. To the left of the marbled area is a vertical strip of dark, textured material, likely the book's spine. In the bottom-left corner, there is a small, rectangular white paper label with black text.

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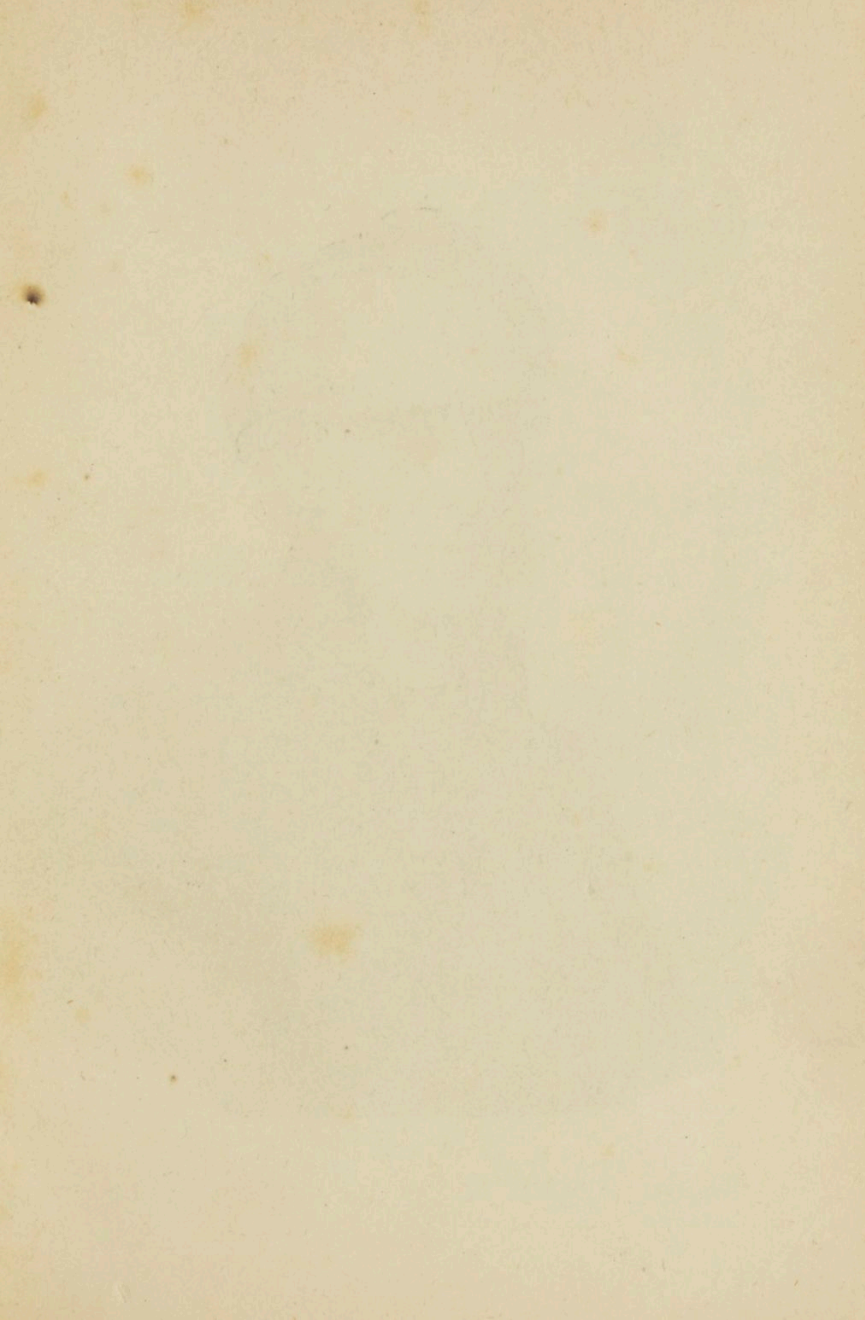


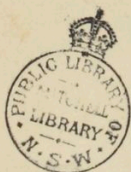
Alfred Lee.

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THE
CRITIC IN CHURCH

OR

MELBOURNE PREACHERS AND PREACHING

REPRINTED FROM THE "WEEKLY TIMES."

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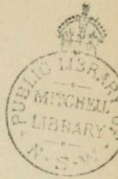
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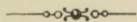
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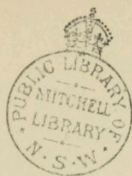


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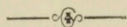


THESE notices of Melbourne preachers and of Melbourne preaching are republished in hope that they will meet with something of the like favour in their collected that they received in their serial form. The author has to express his obligations to the proprietors of the *Weekly Times*, in which paper they first appeared, for the permission to reproduce both them and the accompanying illustrations. With regard to the Preachers themselves, the author trusts that nothing personally hurtful will be found in his remarks. They were intended neither to be harsh nor kind, but true, the writer keeping in view, as his ideal, Clough's verse :—

“ Oh ! for a friend, or more than friend, sincere,
To make me know myself and make me fear.
Oh ! for a touch too gentle to be kind,
To wake to life the mind within the mind.”



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THE CRITIC IN CHURCH.



THE RIGHT REV. DR. PERRY, BISHOP OF
MELBOURNE.

THE cares of the churches have weighed upon Bishop Perry for a quarter of a century, and have left their marks in a wasted frame, a furrowed forehead, and an ascetic countenance. The Bishop's charge has, indeed, been most onerous. He has seen cities grow like ant-hills. Multitudes therein have been dependent upon him for the bread of life. Even now visitations and confirmations, the rites of his church, require him to be a constant traveller, at all seasons, from the Murray to the sea, from Gipps Land to Mount Gambier. Upon him rests the selection of the ministers to feed the Anglican flock—a flock which is fastidious in its choice, which scorns a cheap, illiterate ministry, and has not learned to pay the money price of a trained, educated priesthood. Any stick, if stout and strong, served to drive the Wesleyan flock into the fold. “I have no more to do with your being gentlemen, than I have with your being dancing-masters,” was John Wesley's saying to his pastors. “Lucky man,”

must ejaculate a bishop required by the world to think of outward deportment, by the church to demand theological culture, and by conscience to see that the crook has no twist in it. To serve these three masters with equal faithfulness is to be more than a man ; to fail is to be less than an Anglican Bishop. It would be absurd to say that in this trying situation Dr. Perry has not made bitter enemies. Every strong man placed in a high position does. "Abuse you," said an outspoken friend of another Bishop—Hampden of Hereford—during a famous persecution, "of course they will abuse you if you are worth abusing," adding, with quiet humour, "I wish they would abuse me." The fact that Dr. Perry has smote, and has been smitten, is declared by that very ringing applause which greets him when he meets his ministers and the lay representatives of his church in their little annual assembly, and which the newspapers always describe as "enthusiastic." And so it is. But judges of men would recognise in a moment its mixed character. Half of the loud and long-continued cheers expresses confidence in the Bishop, but part is the cheer of victory or defiance in presence of a common foe. Such feelings can dwell in clerical bosoms.

Bishop Perry may be said, with literal truth, to be known through the length and breadth of the land, for he has preached in every pulpit in his diocese, and the pulpit, if it is nothing else, is a great test of character. Many sittings are not required to take his portrait. No one, after listening to a solitary address, could mistake him, for his sermons, one and all, speak the man. Each is clear as a diamond of "purest ray serene"—a diamond, cut and polished by the lapidary, as brilliant and as hard and as cold. His sermons are designed to rivet the attention, not to pierce the conscience, nor move the heart. They are religious essays on the "whole duty of man"—more especially

a Low Churchman. As compositions they are models of their school ; simple to severity in diction ; classical in construction ; never burdened with the smallest ornamentation, with a trace of illustration or imagery. Jewels are they without settings. They are read with an equal faultlessness of intonation, with a deliberate and telling slowness, every sentence impressed on the auditor, not only each word, but each syllable separately accented. The clear metallic voice, which, low as it is, will make the largest building echo, is freed from all trace of impurity, free also from the thrill of anger, the pathos of pity, the quiver of emotion. It might be that of a disembodied spirit. Free from cant, free from rant, pallid, and passionless, are the discourses of the Bishop. They are beautiful as statues are ; not as are creatures of flesh and blood. Lovely are they as icebergs seen by moonlight, but nature demands her price for that as for every other spectacle. She drives a ready-money trade also, does that dame, and gives with one hand and holds out the other. The price here is chilliness ; with warmth of current, icebergs cannot be.

The Bishop speaks to cultivated men and women, who can understand argument—or, are supposed to be capable of understanding it—and who have to pay the penalty of foregoing edification—of hearing the living voice of the spirit. The merit of these discourses is their care and clearness. No idle words fall from such lips as the Bishop's. Their demerit is their onesidedness, their intellectuality, their forgetfulness that man is a creature of passion as well as of principle, that he has a body to be subdued as well as a soul to be saved. The hearer is constrained to admit that the truth is preached ingenuously and purely, but it has been coldly imparted, and it is coldly received. Too often such preaching is forgotten as soon as it is heard : it awakens no energy of will ; enkindles no ardent aspirations ; it gives

birth to no divine despair. The whole church must have heard addresses from their spiritual head which have had all the rigour and method of suits in equity. One illustration must suffice. In the sermon he preached to commemorate the twenty-fifth year of his episcopate, the Bishop enumerated the most striking instances of the signal "loving-kindness of the Lord." Only a mathematical and logical mind would have placed prominent in the list, as Dr. Perry did, the fact that "the boundaries of the diocese were coterminous with those of the colony."

As an administrator the Anglican Church has had a zealous business agent in Bishop Perry. Acute and industrious, clever and energetic, he has defended well its temporal interests. His success is declared by the state of his diocese. When the traveller sees that substantial churches have sprung up with nearly equal pace with mushroom townships, and finds the Word preached in each, it may well be said of the Bishop—he is the last man to say it of himself—*Si monumentum quaeris circumspice*. Only zeal, joined to great administrative powers, could have secured the church its present material position—the zeal of a man who could keep his eye fixed on the working of the whole machinery, not only the revolutions of a single wheel—who could watch while others slept, and labour while others loitered. His unselfish conduct in pecuniary matters has set a high example to his communion. By this, and by earnest endeavour, he has done much to quicken the church in its novel position in the colony as an unestablished sect. His merits as an administrator do not end here. To see him manage the Church assembly, gently terminating a debate, or piloting a measure through committee, always calmest when temper begins to rise, smiling blandly among the scowlers, is a lesson in the art of transacting public business.

There were the makings of a most judicious "Mr. Speaker" in the Bishop. But neither the temporal affairs of the church, nor preparation for the pulpit absorbs the most of Bishop Perry's attention. His great labour has been to maintain purity of doctrine; and success has crowned his exertions. The claim may be made that in this one diocese, this oasis in the desert, there is not a church where ritualism shows its head, nor a pulpit from which aught but orthodoxy is preached. Nothing indeed is farther from the Bishop than any idea of toleration of the ideas of which he conscientiously disapproves—surely, the only toleration worthy of the name. He is too keen a logician to be, in spiritual matters, a model, an all-embracing Bishop. His mind is swift to detect differences, and to dwell on their importance, rather than to discern all essential unities. His is the centrifugal, or throwing-off force, rather than the centripetal, or the uniting.

Mankind may always be divided into two classes—the poetical or sympathizing, and the logical or differentiating—the men who see Divine unity, and the men who perceive eternal differences. To the one the chess-board is all white; to the other it is all black. The one gaze on Christ crucified, the others behold the heretic accursed. It would not be difficult to decide with which class to place the Bishop. It would be Calvin's. And thus, while he achieves the same measure of success as Calvin did, and is respected and loved as Calvin was, there attaches to him the same counterbalancing odium. When Calvin is mentioned there ever rises to the student the pale face of the martyred Servetus; and with Bishop Perry there comes the recollection of the ministers of the Broad and High Church divisions of the Anglican communion who have been admitted to the fold in England, who have been ordained and set apart for Gospel labours by orthodox

bishops there, but who have left this colony disappointed and sometimes broken men, to feed flocks elsewhere, because the price of pulpits was one they could not pay ; because they preferred to face loss and ruin rather than in disputed dogma renounce the faith in which they were consecrated. Uniformity is obtained by this process of expulsion and repression, but the price of uniformity is a heavy one always ; it is life. In England the opposite policy has been pursued—that of saying to conscientious, moral men, willing to subscribe to the Church's articles and the Church's creeds, "Go thou also into the Lord's vineyard." Arnold and Robertson were both licensed by bishops who disapproved of their peculiar points. Both men were saved to the church, and have become the proudest boasts of its modern oratory and literature. Here they must have been as "dumb dogs." Canon Liddon, at St. Paul's Cathedral, and Dean Stanley, at Westminster Abbey, are the centres of the pulpit power of London. Neither the High nor the Broad Church orator could find a pulpit here. Stopford Brookes, Her Majesty's personal chaplain, the biographer of Robertson, the successor to his mantle of prophetic fire, could hope for no licence in the diocese of Melbourne. The most noble, the most intense, the most enlightened of the apostles—the apostle of the third heaven—has written, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty ;" but the Bishop has read the last word as "orthodoxy." In his spiritual capacity he is the conscientious, the confident, the determined head of the dominant party ; not so much the Bishop of the diocese as the leader of the majority. Woe to the vanquished !

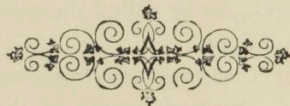
Strange was the contrast presented in a Melbourne church three years ago, when side by side stood, ministering at the altar, George Selwyn, metropolitan Bishop of New Zealand, Bishop designate of Lichfield—now named by men with an

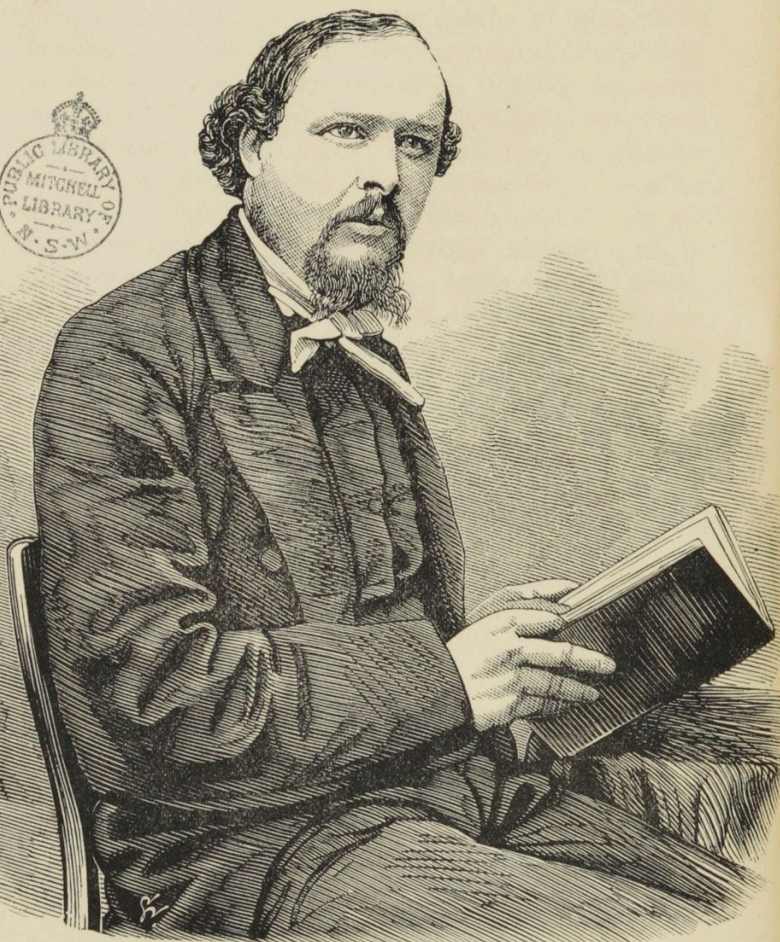
earnest hope for the next vacant archiepiscopal see—and Charles Perry, Bishop of Melbourne. Half a lifetime ago the two men had equally sacrificed high prospects, had left England in the flush of University honours to preach the gospel in the “uttermost isles of the sea.” The one the Paul of his period, the Augustine of his age ; by perils oft, by journeyings oft, by endurance of hunger and privation, of dangers more terrible than the serpent’s fang, had gained for Christianity its latest and noblest triumph—the rescue from a fanatical idolatry of a noble, and even heroic race. His words were words of power. His fervid eloquence melted the heart of stone. The heathen and the cannibal heard, and, lo, many thousands were baptised the same day. It was an era in life to hear him, on New Zealand hills, address the armed host of British soldiery arrayed for battle, or to pray with them after their return from slaughter ; to see the stern man weep, and the strong man tremble. His eloquence was no trick of words, it bore no traces of the rhetorician ; it was the disclosure of truths and ideas, and of fervid feelings too burning to be concealed. Enthusiasm imparted an unknown, and sometimes a terrible strength to his words. Divine ecstasy kindled his face like that of Moses on the mount. He smote the sinner, but he enlarged mightily the bounds of the church, for he called the wicked to repentance—not to correct opinions.

The mission of Bishop Perry has been of a different character. Luther, the regenerator of the nations, is the type of the one ; Calvin, the organiser, has been already named as that of the other. The one the man of the people, the other of the divines. The one enwrap, bold, and fiery, the other systematic, accurate, severe. Holy energy the characteristic of the one, Christian calmness of the other. War the element of the first, order of the second. Such their differences. The faithfulness and earnestness of both servants

have been equal; it is not for man to mete out their respective praise.

And passing from matters of policy and opinion in Bishop Perry's career, we can all gaze with grateful pleasure on its personal facts. In days of extravagance and dissoluteness he has set before the community the "white flower of a spotless life." The moral virtues have been more than insisted upon; they have been practised. In a selfish generation he has been unselfish; in a wealth-seeking community he has sacrificed his treasure. He may be blamed; he will never be shamed. His shortcomings are those of his physical and mental constitution. The sun of the Anglican diocese, he has enlightened the communion: he could not vivify it. He could impart light, but not warmth; he could shine, but not kindle. Frost and Heat, they are both "ministers of Him to do Him pleasure," and Bishop Perry is a worker in frost.





ST. PETER'S, EASTERN HILL.

MELBOURNE might be called a City of Churches, for, from every point of view, spires and towers meet the eye of the gazer. Its people might be described as a community of churchgoers by the stranger who beheld the thronged streets of a Sunday morning. At 11 o'clock on the first day of the week, at all events, there are no outward and visible signs of that decay of pulpit power, and that decadence of church influence, and that supremacy of licentiousness we are all accustomed to bewail with some bitterness on week days, after the fashion of our forefathers. Our purpose is to join in the throng thus hastening to Divine service, to describe the manner of men who occupy the high office of preachers; to glance, as occasion may be, at those who discharge the almost as high duties of hearers.

We wait at the portals of St. Peter's for a time, for the day is a church holiday, and the glorious rejoicing sun, "nor dim nor red" has invited worshippers forth. And so the entrances to the building are blocked by strangers, through whom filter the regular attendants of the church, with velvet-bound prayer-books in hand, seeking their cushioned seats. The congregation is evidently fashionable, and the sensitive stranger, by a not unnatural conclusion, may leap to the assumption that it is also High Church. However, he may discharge from his mind any fear of receiving a shock from any outward and visible display of Ritualistic proclivities. If a suspicion of perfume greets him, it proceeds from no censer swung by acolyte, but merely from the cambric handkerchief of the gentleman who precedes him, and who is preparing to bury his face decently and elegantly in preparatory prayer. The rustle and the glow of colours in the

opposite aisle, and the turning of all heads, marks a procession, not of priests, but of ladies. They have stepped out of villa residences as regards the flesh, and out of the fashion plates of *Le Follet* as regards costume. About the lilies of the valley who toiled not over their toilettes one feels assured. Let us also devoutly and reverently hope—seeing what the fashions of the day are—that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these.

There are people who delight in contemplating virtue in rags, but a glance round shows that they need not visit Saint Peter's. Virtue here is well fed and well-dressed—will be turning over its bank-book to-morrow as it does the Litany to-day—is prepared to make the best of both worlds, and a fair and goodly spectacle does virtue present under these gratifying circumstances—of the aged, whose spectacles are gold-rimmed; of the young, rejoicing, as youth does and must rejoice, in its braveries. “A gladdening and a prosperous sun” has shone over these worshippers, and, as we afterwards see when the heavily-laden collection-plates go round, they are mindful of the circumstance.

No church, we are told, equals St. Peter's in its charitable offerings. One can understand, therefore, the complacency of those numerous attendants who otherwise would have a right to cogitate with alarm upon the parable of the comparative ease of a camel entering the eye of a needle, and a rich man reading his title clear to a mansion in the skies. The stranger is privileged to glance round the congregation, besides which, when he goes to St. Peter's, he may do as St. Peter's does. In this seat he sees a Cabinet Minister, in that a millionaire. All the doctors of the East-end (and their name is legion) are here in the persons of their wives and families. A pew in St. Peter's follows, as inevitably as a logical conclusion, the possession of a three-storied house and a shining brass plate in Collins-street. Not a few of

the busiest of the practitioners themselves manage to steal away from their practice, giving their dashing pairs of chesnuts and bays a Sunday morning's rest, and, let it be hoped, their patients a morning's respite from draughts and medicines. Here at least doctors might, with singular advantage, be included in the set prayers for magistrates—a prayer for patience, inquiry, and discretion. More of them still will attend the shorter evening service, and no accidents ever occur to call any one of their number out. Their position is a little too assured to need any device, stale or rare. St. Peter's is a little above the arrangement. One feels instinctively that the intrusion of a doctor's messenger would be regarded by every seat-holder as an insult to his personal intelligence; for let it not be supposed that the congregation is sleepy or dull in any sense. It is perfectly evident that every lady will be prepared, when she comes out, to express her opinion on everybody else's behaviour and dress; and in all human probability, every gentleman, after a short summary verdict on the sermon, will criticise with musical zeal all the points of the service, besides confiding to the wife of his bosom, in the afternoon, his private conviction that with the salary Brown, Smith, or Robinson draws from the bank, or the department, or the office, Mrs. Smith, or Mrs. Brown, or Mrs. Robinson is going altogether too far.

Visitors are present in great numbers at St. Peter's, for its minister and its services have both a name in the land, and strangers in the city naturally drift to it. Strangers are always to be seen there, a downright poorly dressed person never is. All of the congregation cannot be rich, but as they are never shabby, one is driven to the conclusion that a good hat and a passable bonnet are regarded as qualifications for attendance; and that when the young people have nothing to wear they exchange public for private devotions. The service itself is a musical one, to the horror of Bishop Perry, who

fulminates at intervals in the official *Messenger*, but without terrifying the officiating minister. It is rendered this special morning with admirable effect by the white-robed choristers who fill the side seats at the lower end of the church.

The assistant minister, the Rev. A. Bromby, son, as the family likeness tells us, of the well-known principal of the Church of England Grammar School, intones his part of the service to-day, and the creeds are rung forth, as Arnold insisted they ought to be, and had them at his Rugby chapel, as the "war songs of the Church militant." Mr. Summers, the organist, has done his duty well, and, whatever may be urged against musical services, St. Peter's is one of the congregations where we see its benefits displayed, and not its vices—the power of sacred music to chase away the evil spirits of the world from the mind of the man of business or of pleasure, as it dispelled the glamour of Saul ; its influence to raise the soul, if only for a moment, to the gates of Heaven. There are congregations who, worshipping with the intellect, feel that they can exclude the senses, the fancy, and the imagination from their devotions. St. Peter's does not. Its most zealous supporters are the strongest advocates of the musical service. With the Litany, prayers, canticles, and anthems of their Church derived from all and every source, the spoil of the ages, "all the light of ancient story" streaming upon them, joined to music hallowed in itself by association, they realize the possession of that "communion of the saints" it is the boast of the High Anglicans to anticipate upon earth.

To address a congregation of this nature is an unusual responsibility. The lamented Frederick Robertson has left on record his sinking of the heart when he became pastor of a fashionable and fluctuating congregation, and the minister of this church has certainly to face his share of change of faces, and of male and feminine frivolity. It is

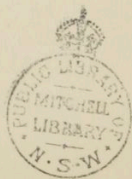
a great privilege also, this possession of St. Peter's pulpit, for there are men in the congregation whose influence in the land is powerful for good or evil, who are there liable to be influenced themselves. The preacher is before us in the comparatively young man, fair, and of pleasant face, who has mounted the pulpit, and who, on the conclusion of the hymn, will commence his address. It proves to be on the Holy Communion, and the central idea is acknowledged from "*Ecce Homo*."

Professor Seeley's great work has evidently few more ardent admirers than Mr. Handfield. Lord Shaftesbury may believe that the volume was "vomited from the jaws of hell;" the incumbent of St. Peter's would repeat the dictum of Mr. Gladstone, that the book was more of a gift from Heaven. The address is not long. Mr. Handfield never exceeds the half hour, and even then his congregation are the last of the worshippers who stream forth from the tabernacles of the Eastern Hill, for the service has encroached on the preacher's time. It has been a practical address, and has commanded the complete attention of knots of young men who are earnest admirers of their preacher, and who will exchange opinions, not on the flags outside, which is vulgar—not St. Peter's-like, resembling too much waiting for the ladies, and to be left to the snobs—but when they meet at the office or on the block, next day, or at Tuesday's ball. Theology intrudes into all these places now; and no one's theology and no one's sermons are more talked over there than Mr. Handfield's.

The preacher would not be pronounced a great orator by critics—not, at any rate, by virtue of any grace of action, nor of volume or modulation of tone. He is listened to with pleasure, however, for his voice is clear and penetrating, and his diction always elegant. Moreover he preaches, if not on the news of the day, on the questions of this

generation. Its longings for a more close and more living knowledge of its Divinity find in him a continual echo. And he deals constantly with great social issues which oppress the age—its duty to the poor, Biblical revision, the evil of dress, the sin of great cities—with a straightforwardness which shows that he is in communion with the spirit of advance in the church. If he joins in the appointed supplication for rain in a season of drought, it is to tell his hearers that prayer is well, but unless it takes also the form of work with the hands, and assumes the shape of the construction of reservoirs, as science may dictate, it is not well. Broad and practical as he is on these matters it is sufficient, however, to hear the rev. gentleman on any test subject, such as the position of the priesthood, to be able to fix his position at once in the Anglican communion—that of a member of the High Church party.

In all probability only an earnest man of the character here indicated would keep together the congregation of St. Peter's. A Boanerges, or son of thunder, would disgust them rather than terrify. A mere evangelical shedder of tears would be secretly ridiculed by the educated audience. Tradition asserts that one gentleman who did move himself to weeping had to reprove his hearers for laughing instead of wailing. Neither brimstone nor treacle would be acceptable at St. Peter's. They have now the theology of the day put forward by an apostle of sweetness and culture—a man familiar with the literature of the day, and particularly with its higher poetry; who speaks from the fulness of his heart; who is felt to be an earnest Christian; who is also felt—without ever dreaming of the idea himself—to be a Christian gentleman. Other denominations have drawn their apostles from other ranks, but it is from men of Mr. Handfield's stamp and tone that the Anglican Church has, in all ages, derived its leaders.



SCOTS' CHURCH, COLLINS STREET.

FOR what purpose the congregation in Scots' Church assemble—the Presbyterian church whose graceful spire crowns the crest of the Eastern Hill in Collins-street—admits of no manner of doubt. It is to hear the sermon. The heads of the people displayed in the pews here are of a shrewd, inquiring, intellectual type. If there is the smallest truth in phrenology, these persons are the last whom we should expect to appreciate the piety of routine or the sensuous beauty of choral song. Something for the mind to grapple with must be their want—their preacher must be able to take his place in the cavern of the brain as well as the recesses of the heart. Here is a brick to judge the temple by: three out of the four members of Parliament present in the church the evening of this visit are keen logical debaters, one of them the most keen and most logical arguer in the Assembly—an orator whose trained tongue, like a Damascus blade, will find its way through any crevice, any flaw in his opponent's address, who goes into a debate like a bridegroom entering his chamber, and rejoices in a dreary financial struggle like a strong man to run a race. Watch his set, keen face at the close of the discourse, and you will see that he is ready to murmur an appreciative "hear, hear;" and that is an assurance that, whether you have liked the preacher or disliked him, whether he has vibrated the cords of your bosom, or has swept the harp in vain, you have listened to no inconsequential twaddle, but to a logical and intellectual sermon, a discourse distinguished by force of brain ability.

The eyes of this congregation converge steadily to one point, and that is, the pulpit, with a fixed look, nay, something of a stony glare, it seems impossible to divert. No

admiration-loving young damsel could be advised by a judicious *chaperon* to faint in the Scots' Church ; for unless she struggled, which would disarrange her attire, she would be unnoticed, and if she made the sacrifice, she would be taken out and forgotten. We are late, and with friends (*peccavimus, peccavimus*), and the pew destined to receive us is well up the aisle, but the unwarranted intrusion is ignored. There is no turning of heads, and the men from north of the Tweed who frequent the church are like the Greeks in that their sharp cut, forward-projecting features preclude them from squinting. If they want to gaze they must turn the neck. They do not. They have come for the discourse ; they are waiting for it, and they have not long to wait. The service is but a setting for this jewel, and the lustre of the latter is undimmed by any superfluous ornamentation.

Long extempore prayers do not seem to have many admirers now-a-days, even amongst those who object to a formal liturgy. They are abandoned, as a rule, to lazy pastors, who prefer vain repetitions to girding up their loins for solid preaching, and at the Scots' Church the minister is energetic, and has little spare time apart from the message he is burning to deliver. That when we have to sing, he only gives us two verses of the psalms "arranged for singing in public places," is ascribable perhaps to his good literary taste, which must shudder at the too successful effort made by the Presbyterian paraphrasers to unpoetise that grandest of all poetry, the poetry of the Hebrew bards, and reduce to commonplace that most majestic of all diction—the language of the inspired prophets of Israel. How the sins of the father are visited upon the ninth and tenth generation is only fully realised when we behold the children of culture in the nineteenth century turning over the mutilated metrical version of the rude iconoclasts of the seventeenth. Noticeable traces of a rebellion in spirit are

visible. Music might do something to soften the incongruous language in which the Psalms of David are bade to appear, and lo! there is a harmonium in the building—a mechanical aid to devotion. The fact would stamp the church at once as a church of progress. A harmonium, in the natural order of development, may be expected to lead to a great deal. The cold, dreary walls of the building drive one's thoughts inwards at this juncture, and organ-building in the air is the result—visions of a future full-voiced choir, and “service high and anthems clear.” Such tricks can strong imagination play us! But it may be mentioned as a palliative to the offended, that at present the musical transgressor is of the most juvenile proportion, has an infantile voice with a squeak in it, and is altogether so diminutive that, unless one visits the gallery, there seems to be no glimpse obtainable of the interesting little stranger.

Two small portions of Scripture read, half an hour consumed in all since church began, and the preliminaries have been disposed of. No more surreptitious peerings round by the critic. The preacher quotes his text. He has obtained a silent and even a strained attention, and in the first minute one sees that here we have no common man, no mere clerical attorney exercising his wits on legal arguments for salvation, no special pleader for some antique form of opinion, no mere artist submitting polished brain work for our mental inspection, but an interpreter of living truths, a man transfusing into our passive absorbing systems his deepest and most vital thoughts.

That, in a sentence, is the characteristic of the preaching of the Rev. Peter Menzies—its polished earnestness. Like Paul, the physical man is “mean in presence.” Perhaps the allusion is irreverent. It is difficult to resist it; for a dark, sicklied, sallow countenance, and a sad face, lit up strangely, now and then, by enthusiasm, recalls naturally

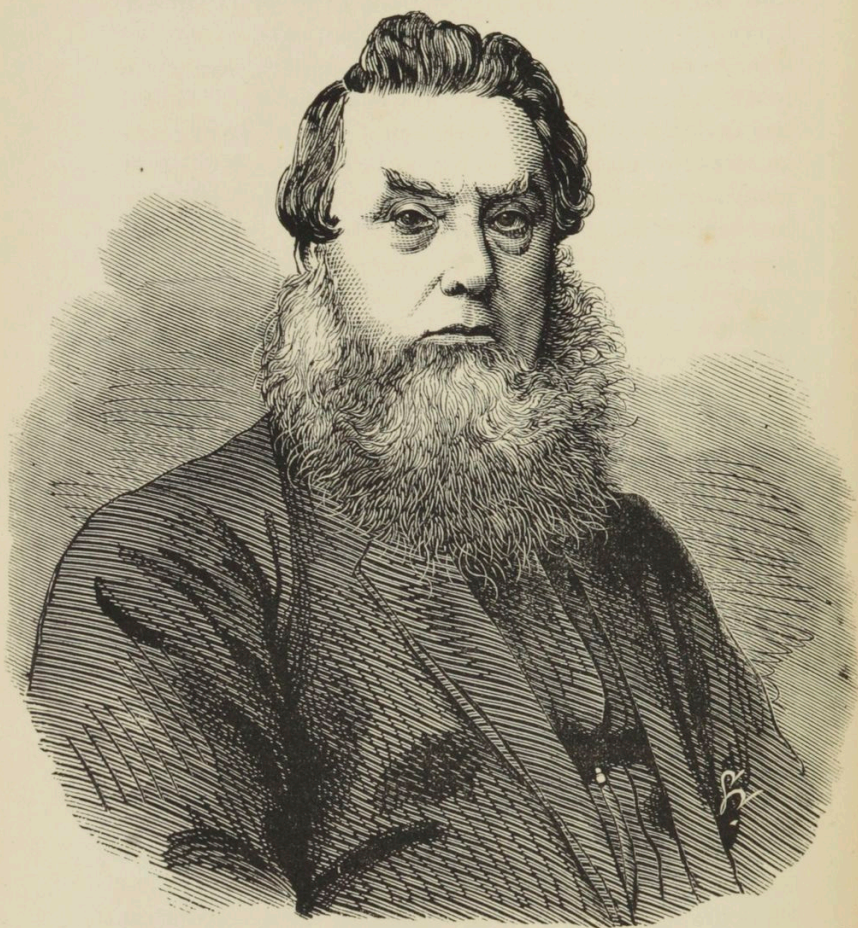
our fancied portrait of the energetic apostle of the Gentiles who suffered from a thorn in the flesh, and who holds his readers to this day by rush of argument mingled with bursts of declamation—by his fulness of heart as well as his vigour of intellect. The characteristics of any one of the epistles are those of Mr. Menzies' sermons. They are, as it has been said, polished compositions. Epigrammatic sentences every now and then, cutting as a knife, tell the critic of long study. The illustrations, generally taken from Nature, smell to him of the lamp, for they are apposite, worked out, and without redundancy of detail. Such choice and picturesque language as the preacher employs can only be the result of a naturally vigorous growth subject to a ruthless pruning. And all this labour is expended upon ideas which are not only noble, but sympathetic—the ideas of a man who has sounded some of the depths of the human heart. He speaks also in unaffected tones and in natural cadences. He knows something of the outside world ; he has read his newspaper. The vivifying element of earnestness is never wanting ; the soul within gives weight to his words and fire to his sentences.

Here then are most of the elements of a great pulpit orator ; but this high position—surely the noblest to which man can aspire—Mr. Menzies has yet to attain. He may grasp it, for he is yet young ; his foot is high on the hill side, and his gaze is on the pinnacle. His friends would say with confidence that he would, but that, in looking at him, one is sadly reminded how, after all, the first condition of human success is that in which the brute creation may surpass their lords—bodily health and physical vigour. The preacher's Doric tones may jar on an Anglican ear, but that is a secondary point. The impression is soon forgotten, for his voice is far more susceptible of modulation, especially of pathos, than that of most Scotch clergymen, and it is only

the monotonous voice that is incapable of being rendered attractive. His pulpit action is Mr. Menzies' one great drawback at present, or rather his lack of action. What he wants is to rid himself of his present servitude to his notes, and to acquire the faculty of speaking, in some degree at least, to his auditors. The preacher leaves himself no opportunity of speaking directly to his hearers. We are hearing a sermon read at vacancy the greater part of the time, and that is something very different from having a sermon preached to living men. There is great force in the saying of old George Herbert, how the preacher best of all procures attention "by a diligent and busy cast of his eye upon his auditors, with letting them know that he observes who marks and who does not, and with particularising of his speech now to the younger sort, and then to the elder—now to the poor, and now to the rich. This is for you, and this is for you." Sometimes Mr. Menzies does get away from his writing—it is only for a few too brief sentences—but then, while he is leaning over his pulpit boards, speaking in trembling tones to his listeners, face to face, man to man, each pregnant period given in as if on oath, we feel how great a preacher he might and may become.

The sermon this May evening shows that, like the men who are taking the lead in the Scotch Church at home—Dr. M'Leod, Principal Tulloch, Dr. Caird, and others—Mr. Menzies belongs to the Broad Church, and shrinks visibly before the naked eye of the mental man from the legal machinery of Calvinism. This particular discourse has been, in substance, nothing more nor less than a vehement protest against the extreme doctrine of predestination, which was once as a buttress of the church. The gulf between the preacher and predestination pure and simple is indeed very deep. In one emphatic burst, in which Mr. Menzies abandoned that fatal note-book, the secret of his failure wherever

he does fail, he besought his hearers, whatever clouds of infidelity swept over them, to hold fast to moral good, to adhere to the belief that man is free to mould his own destiny. "If I could not believe that," he said, "I would never enter a pulpit." The sermon was on the influence of the Holy Spirit. "Were it proved," said the preacher, "that the influence worked capriciously, and without preparation, in violation of the great law of Nature, which is evolution, that would be to me a formidable objection." The allusion was to the arguments of unbelievers, for this pastor is a true shepherd. He drives away the wolves from the fold, as well as feeds the sheep. Altogether, as Presbyterians are given to linger on the way home to discuss their preacher's points, and to argue over their doctrines on succeeding evenings, one imagines that Mr. Menzies must supply a constant succession of themes for animated controversies. There can be little of stagnation in the Scots' Church pool, with his own spring of fresh new thought bubbling from the bottom. No thinking men of any denomination can enjoy "blessed sleep from heaven" under this preacher. And the reference is not to physical slumber. Men will go to sleep on the rack, and they may find oblivion, therefore, in the angular excoriating pews of this edifice, which were built either for a stiff-backed generation or in defiance of the flesh, and deserve to be treated in a separate essay by themselves. But the mentally drowsy must go elsewhere. Thorough complacent ease, personal immunity, and absence of prickings of the soul are good things only to be obtained under the valiant beaters who devote themselves to thrashing out the dry husks of a dead theology, the Preachers of the Past. What Mr. Menzies preaches is the Christianity of the Present. Or, if not that, it is the Christianity of the Future; and then he has but to stand still for the revolving world to reach him. In a dozen years he will be orthodox.



WESLEY CHURCH, LONSDALE STREET.

FOOLS are said by society to build houses. Every conscientious observer must have said in his heart that fools do not stop there, but erect churches also. No other explanation accounts for the hideous structures to be seen, in all lands, dedicated to Divine service ; nor for the perverse placing of majestic buildings on insignificant sites. For instance, the whole effect of the massive architecture of the Lonsdale-street Wesleyan Church is lost to the city by its erection in a hollow, hemmed in with buildings, for the most part mean and indifferent in character, too bad to be endured, and yet too valuable to be pulled down. Until you enter the grounds you are actually unaware of the features and the extent of the splendid pile, and are altogether unprepared for the long aisles, the spandrils, the pillars, the vaulted roof, which place this church, as a building, first amongst the Protestant edifices of the city. It is a noble church. With its galleries, and arches, and recesses, it is in marked contrast to the circular and amphitheatre tabernacles spreading on all sides now, and adopted, it appears, by modern society as its architectural ideal. It would be an interesting inquiry, did time and place, and above all, space permit, whence did these latter edifices derive their being, and what do they represent ? The Chinese pagoda is declared to be the household Tartar tent beatified ; has sweet recollections of home about it. In Persian architecture the traveller sees the lotus and the palm reproduced in slender shaft and flowering capital. The Gothic cathedal also, Emerson has said, with the force of inherent truth, had its origin with a people who, in majestic woodlands, looked up through Nature unto Nature's God. We see its birthplace in the

frozen forests of the North, where each avenue is an aisle, a temple not made with hands ; lit with the coloured lights of the rising sun, or the pallid pulsings of the Aurora, filled by moaning winds, with the rushing wondrous strain,

“ When wandering on the echoing strand,
The enthusiast hears at even.”

In the chapel of this day every seat is equal one to another ; no worshipper can be seen less than another ; no other arrangement could possibly show more of all ; not one of devotion's phases need be wasted ; the builders have remembered that if Providence can read the secrets of all corners, man cannot : not an attitude is thrown away ; not a glove nor a bonnet can escape notice. The sinner who smites upon his breast would be puzzled to find a place to stand afar off and lift up his voice. The scene recalls nothing save the grand stand or the theatre. If it fulfils the devotional aspirations of modern society, it must be because society's devotional aspirations are lamentably small. Martin, in his majestic architectural illustrations of *Paradise Lost*—architecturally majestic, and little more—has drawn one such arena, but the site is not heaven ; the gathering is not of saints, and the central figure is not a minister of light. Different indeed are one's recollections of the venerable piles, the lowly, consecrated buildings, where Christians were wont to worship in other lands ; where the scene itself exercised a sobering, softening influence, and the “ religious light ” imparted a solemn expression to every face, young or old, pale or ruddy, smooth or wrinkled.

In this Wesleyan Church, a chastening, hallowing effect, consecrating the building, lifting the thoughts upward, or diverting them to the great hereafter, is produced by the sight of an occasional tablet on the walls in memorial of some members of the fold who have gone before. Imagine

memorials of death in the modern chapel, all luxury, light, and studied elegance! More incongruous would they be than a skeleton at a feast. Their antithesis, rouge spots on the cheeks of a corpse, would not be more shocking. One enthusiastic ecclesiologist has declared that Gothic is the *only* Christian architecture. Without adopting that sweeping dictum, it is open to venerating beings to be grateful to the Wesleyans for clinging to it.

A large congregation worships here, and, let it be added, a healthy looking congregation. The lank-haired youth, the virgins wise and foolish, old and staid, or young and giggling, the dyspeptic, cadaverous, middle-aged beings, whose God dwells in a disordered stomach, and who make up the sum of some chapel audiences, are invisible—or if not invisible, are few and far between. Another good sign about the congregation is, that the men and women open their mouths, instead of singing on the sly. Apparently they like harmony. The music introduced into the Church of England litany, which is used here, would call down the especial condemnation of the Anglican bishop. The effect when the entire congregation unite in some of the Wesleys' own fervent hymns is impressive. In none of the histories of Wesley, or of the church he founded, is justice done to the sacred poetry of the regenerator, and yet his hymnology will possibly survive his sermons. It would be hard to say how much he and that earlier reformer, whom in so many points he resembled, advanced their cause by their pressing sacred harmony into congregational service. They were men of this world as well as the other. They knew that the organ might be the servant, but would never be the tyrant of the real, the earnest, the fervent preacher. Luther's tunes were sung by the Catholics of his own day.

Wesley's hymns are become part of the life of the Protestant church. Hear a congregation pour out their souls in the

spiritual longings they express, and you understand a great part of the strength of Wesleyanism. Listen to the long, long list of prayer-meetings, and of social gatherings, designed to bring members of the churches individually together, and you grasp a second source of peculiar power. Pay heed to the specialities of their sermons, the plain, familiar speaking to plain men, the throwing away of all veils and screens, and you realise the whole.

The Wesley Church, like the other churches of the denomination, enjoys a change of preachers. Its principal minister, its responsible pastor, the gentleman we have come to hear, is the Rev. James Bickford. There are disagreeables to be conquered in listening to Mr. Bickford. A strong, harsh voice, incapable of modulation, is one; the mannerism of his sect is another, and an unmistakeable mannerism it is, conspicuous as the name branded across the brow of the Beast. It is always legible. Occasionally a lay preacher who has sat at the feet of various Gamaliels, finds his way into Parliament, and he stands detected at once by his measured diction, his unctuous delivery, his long balanced sentences, the club of Hercules uplifted ever, the rumble always,

“Heaven’s awful thunder or a distant cart.”

Mr. Bickford is altogether possessed by this turgid spirit. He is clothed in it like a garment. It harmonises with his person, which is also heavy, solid, giving comfortable assurance that saints have not always the thorn in the flesh, that there is corn other than in Egypt, that the garner of Israel are full, that fattening pastures lie within the fold. Were it the minister’s lot to climb up the Delectable Mountains, the task would be undertaken with soberness and toil. Not his the light heart, and elastic step, and joyous shout, of the religious enthusiast, but the safe and

cautious advance of the orthodox divine. His mode of sermonising would commend itself to the heart of old Herbert, for, as the godly rector of Bemerton says, "The parson's method of handling a text consists of declaring its true meaning, and then some just observations drawn out of the whole passage as it lies whole and unbroken in Scripture." This the writer considers "natural, sweet, and grave," whereas the other mode of crumbling a passage into words, hath in it neither sweetness nor gravity nor authority, and the Dictionary, says Herbert, would suit the preachers who adopt it as well as the Bible.

Mr. Bickford is one of Herbert's preachers of "large discourse, looking before and after." And like most Wesleyans he has a fund of genial anecdote, which tells often when genius itself would fail. All those we have heard from him have been apt and pointed, sermons in themselves, like the scriptural parables, familiar not vulgar, dwelling in the memory when exordium, and application, when "firstly," and "secondly," and "thirdly" have gone the way of most sermons. Mr. Bickford's admirers will hardly claim for him any exalted oratorical merit. He is far more cold and formal than one might expect from a Wesleyan divine, with less of action indeed than the average Anglican curate, if that be possible. The Church-goer is told that there are moments when the preacher soars, on heavy wing it is true, but still soars, leaving platitudes and formalities behind, and arising into pure feeling, and a strain of earnest eloquence. Unhappy, or censorious critic! For his part, he felt more inclined to yawn like the wretched Eutychus, than to tremble like the stricken Felix. The terror was more than once upon him that—to quote Sydney Smith—the preacher imagined souls were saved like Eve was made—by first casting the man into a deep sleep. Perhaps the Church-goer was unfortunate in his visits. He will undertake therefore neither

to affirm nor deny the statement made to him that sometimes Mr. Bickford's congregation have an echo, as it were, faint and afar off, but true in tone, of the powerful personal preaching of the Fathers of the sect. Would that it were more than echo. In an age of luxury and indifference, we need those appeals, those interrogations, that sifting of the heart by which Whitfield and Wesley did their mighty work. Only a "peal of thunder" roused Alexander from the lap of Thais.

One can imagine two men leaving Mr. Bickford's church with very contrary tales. The one would dwell upon the absence of speculative intellect, betrayed by his addresses—would wish for a quicker and more enlightened sympathy with the spirit of the age—would say that Mr. Bickford is not only, and of course, devoid of sympathy with the fierce, eager "No" of the day, on the one hand, and with its eclectic sympathies, its readiness to reconcile the irreconcilable, to unite those whom the written Word hath put asunder on the other; but fails also to realise the existence of these strivings—sees not the clouds which some see ready to burst over the heads of the churches in storm and deluge—does not breathe the intellectual atmosphere of the day—is a preacher of the old school of thought, of expression, and of style, and not a leader in the new—is himself in intellectual swaddling clothes—may make a Mary weep, but will never draw from a smitten Didymus the cry "My Lord and God." The other would be struck by the preacher's abnegation of personal display in the pulpit—his conscientious striving to put the Gospel and not himself before his audience, and would think no more of the ruggedness of style than a woodsman of the gnarled excrescence of the oak, the signs of its soundness at the core—would see the weak of the fold comforted by an honest shepherd, the vicious rebuked, and the strong assured.

From the different view-points the preacher will be differently judged. But the Church-goer's opinion? Well, he would rather be "taxed for silence than checked for speech." He does not write for those dull elves who fail to see the reason why. If such there be, let them remember the fact that a tree shall be judged by its fruit, and that if it bears fruit after its kind it shall be honoured, and not cut down. He prefers to let the figure of Mr. Bickford dwell in his memory out of the pulpit—where the preacher finishes and the pastor begins—to see him presiding over the social anniversary, or beaming and throwing off life at a tea-meeting, or setting out to raise the fallen, to comfort the comfortless, and to remember the forgotten—a

"Good honest man, close buttoned to the chin;
Broad-cloth without and a warm heart within,"

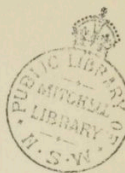
If the stranger goes to Mr. Bickford's preachings expecting to be dazzled or mystified or convinced, he will assuredly be disappointed. The spiritual pauper who attends church to loaf upon a minister for ideas will be sent back empty away. He who goes "with pure mind and feeling"—not only charitable but sympathetic—may hope to leave edified and contented.



ST. FRANCIS'S CHURCH, LONSDALE STREET.

ROME has her spell ; attend her cathedral services and the charm is upon you ; visit St. Francis's and you will sympathise with Arnold when on a foreign tour he worshipped in Chartres cathedral. The bitterest foe of the system, Arnold never was more eloquent than in denouncing on that occasion what he termed "the provoking confusion" continually made between the magnificence and beauty of the Romish church, and the doctrines and practices which divide her from Dissent. When visiting strange shrines, or witnessing alien ceremonies, a liberal allowance must always be made for the effect of novelty. Still, after you have made the deduction at St. Francis's, you will understand how possible it is for congregations to be absorbed in ceremony and praise, in pageantry and prayer, without the assistance of the expounder of the gospels, and how the solemn glories of the service, the mysteries of the Mass, tend to stifle the craving for pulpit oratory. A lecture on colours to the enrapt gazer upon the painter's glowing canvas, would be as much out of place, would jar as harshly, as would lengthy argument after the burst of harmony, the continuous supplications, the symbolism of the Romish ceremonial. The sermon we have come to hear is huddled away into a corner. It is but an excrescence.

The step across the threshold of St. Francis's does indeed take the Church-goer, fresh from the intellectual pastures of Protestantism, into a different world. The crowded state of the large building, the symbolism, the pictures on the walls, the crosses trophied with the events of the Passion, the display of devotional emotion there, are all striking to the stargazer. Upon him their devotional effect is not pallied by



usage. Nave, transept, and aisles swarm with people, taking an active part in the service. To obtain a seat is a difficulty, and then your elbows are converted into instruments of torture by the press ; you are involuntary Pascals with iron spikes at your ribs. Beads you see counted, prayers are audibly murmured by worshippers on their knees ; you do not see young people studying the marriage-service on the sly ; when the silver bell sounds in the Mass you do see every knee bent, and every breath for a moment suspended in silent adoration. And the congregation is thoroughly mixed. Side by side worship master and servant. The seats are free to all. On the same bench is a silk fresh from the mercer's, showing the latest phase of the milliner's art, gay and meretricious enough for a Watteau costume at a fancy ball ; next it is a bonnet—a thing which was a bonnet once—which one would hesitate to rescue with tongs from the gutter now. A bride wears the one, a wretched, mumbling, toothless hag the other. Broad-cloth there, and next it corduroys ; the merchant kneels on the same board as the labourer. Occasionally an Anglican or Presbyterian pastor remembers that “the poor ye shall have always with ye,” is one of the promises made to the church militant. His eye wanders over seats filled with women, bold in attire and wandering in looks, and men, curled and anointed like barbers' dummies. Blinking like an owl at noon-day, he recognises that the poor are not with him. Then echo the churches with wailings, and then teems the press with articles ; and again all is silence. The question, where are the poor, remains unanswered. With a bitter and biting shame it must be confessed by the Protestant Church-goer that the poor, or some of them at least, are here. The outcasts, the failures of this world, the rejected of men, the pitiful, and the fallen, have not been improved out of this church ; not driven into “free seats,” into corners

branded with poverty, as though they were tainted wethers ; not choked with the barren husks of theology. The "weary and heavy laden," those who have not where to lie the head, can still turn to this church, "hoar with the frost of ages," if to no other, as unto a mother. There are creatures in the seat with the Critic who would scare an Anglican congregation ; there are cowering, pitiful, shame-stricken wretches behind him, from whom the virtuous of the chapels would shrink. Why have Protestant ministers lost this "glorious presence" ? Wealthy congregations, and intellectual discourses, and glittering edifices, they are all snares if the result is that the church becomes a den of fashion, if the price paid be the exclusion of poverty, the systematic isolation of misery. The Churches of the Successful ! Their foundations are on sand. The rock of ages is the heart of the poor.

An undefinable murmur runs through the crowded congregation when the sacristy door opens, and in the rear of the procession of surpliced boys is seen the portly form of Father Barry. In him it is evident that the people have one of their favourite ministers. The possessor of a splendid baritone voice, clear as a bell in its upper notes, deep and powerful in its lower, he renders the service with marked musical fervour. The priest's "Gloria in Excelsis" rings through the silent air like a bird note from the earth, the choral response comes pealing like thunder from the clouds. But justice to Father Barry's musical talent must be done by other pens. He stands before us as an orator. Nor is it easy to judge him in that respect, for the preaching of his Church is distinct from that of the Protestant communion. Before a Presbyterian or a Wesleyan divine has commenced his argument, Father Barry has finished his short, close, compact address. What the sonnet is to the poem—what the trumpet note to charge is to the measured

marching tune—are his discourses to the ordinary sermon. Like the snow-flake on the river are they in time, like the smiting hailstorm in effect. Without preface or introduction, the preacher holds the audience at full tension for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour by a brilliant burst of close and rapid declamation, glittering and polished, full of vivid imagery, of appeals to the emotions, and delivered with an equal emphasis of gesture and of style. The preacher's aim is to stir the emotions ; there is no attempt to convince the head. All that controversy could prove is assumed. The addresses impel to action, not thought : they declare the truth without attempting to establish it, much less bottoming it. We have an impassioned declaimer before us, not a subtle arguer. Whether Father Barry could be the latter or not it is purposeless to inquire. At St. Francis's he is the fervid orator, the rhetorician is not required ; argument is needless ; all that logic and reasoning involve is taken as conceded. The declamation is no doubt florid in style ; loud, like a cornet obligato ; moves stately, rather than gracefully ; lacks change of construction a little ; has a copper-plate neatness ; but, then, how effective it is ! The last address we heard him deliver was on the value of time. The past, urged the preacher, is irrevocable ; the future existing only in expectancy ; the present with us is transient as a lightning flash ; and yet that fleeting second is purchased with the blood of the Redeemer. A succeeding picture of the blessed contemplating their past with rejoicings, and the wretched meditating in agony on theirs, was couched in language and uttered with a fire which told audibly in a thrill through the church, and showed visibly in clasped hands and pallid cheeks. It agitated all ; thrilled in every corner. Possibly some people in other congregations might have felt their taste shocked with the vehemence of the highly-wrought passage ; but the multitude was

entranced. Ear-splitting ranting it was not ; there is always a restraint upon the preacher. He finishes at the end of one of his discourses like a war horse reined in from the charge.

These sonnet sermons fall upon the ear with the ease and fluency of unpremeditated effusions ; and yet they are not unpremeditated. They are far too clear and striking for that. "Toil and trouble" is written across them in language readily recognised by the practised eye. The hearer's pleasure is the preacher's preliminary pain. As well might a rhymester attempt to dash off one of Wordsworth's odes, an improvisatore to declaim the "Giaour," or a player of voluntaries to produce a "Dead March," as an unprepared speaker to present an audience with one of Father Barry's packed and fiery exhortations. One fact should be borne in mind by other sects : Father Barry has only to preach occasionally. Whether he could give us these bursts of impassioned oratory, fragments as they are, twice every Sunday, is at least doubtful ; and that is the task Protestant pastors have to perform.

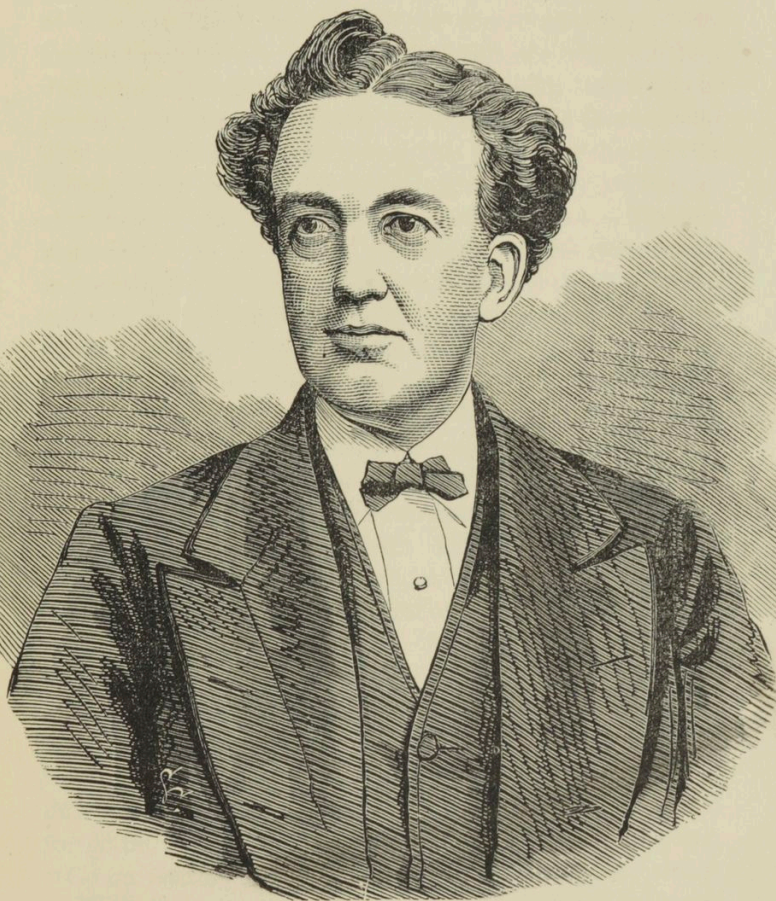
Father Barry's sermons certainly would not please audiences whose religious feelings are linked to the intellectual process. They would be ineffective to congregations which desire the utterances of a reasoned theology ; who distrust the emotions, remembering that they are the servants of the man, and not his masters ; that they may be pressed into the cause of the false as well as the service of the true. Any preacher of any sect could use those of Father Barry's sermons the "Church-goer" has heard, and the quality is at once their weakness and their merit. They are preached, however, not to meet the views of a critic contemplating a model sermon, but to supply the actual want of a living church. The time is short, and a multitude has to be stirred. And before an audience of thousands, and a most mixed audience, where the Minister has to

preach to the mountain and to preach to the plain, only nerve and animation like his, only a simple language and forcible illustrations will strike home. The sweet or classic features which charm the drawing-room are lost upon the public stage. Force is wanted there, and energy, and Father Barry has that. His living *vis* is the secret of half his effect. The very first impression he communicates—and it endures to the last—is that Goethe made on Napoleon: “You are a man,” said the world’s Sword, on meeting the world’s Pen. The man shines through all Father Barry’s oratory. It is refreshing in an age of mysticism to listen to his clear and massive English, his pronounced views, his practical exhortations. He stands in the front rank of our preachers.



THE BAPTIST CHAPEL, ALBERT STREET.

THE reading-desk or rostrum of the Albert-street Chapel is a light breastwork compared with the massive forts of the old-fashioned pulpits. Its elegant shape and velvet-pile chair give it a drawing-room appearance ; and the graceful young man who enters it, with elastic step and cheerful smile, attired in the faultless black and spotless linen of lay life, and with more than a suspicion of jewellery about his person, would only have to exchange his narrow black tie for a narrower strip of white or lavender to be an ornament to any drawing-room. If he produced a crimson-bound Tennyson from his pocket, instead of opening a dowdy black hymn-book, the picture would be complete. Sure, thinks the visitor—if, miserable sinner, he permits a carnal thought to intrude—no more elegant vision ever greeted the eyes of a nonconforming congregation. Sure ten thousand tongues would be unloosed should venturous critic hint disparagement. The people of such a pastor may well look upon him with admiration ; and the tailor, and the laundress, and the jeweller of such a form may gaze with unaffected delight. Such incongruous ideas have to be dismissed. The minister himself is taking stock of the congregation, and the visitor proceeds in turn to notice him once more. Young is he, but certain deep lines show that the possession of the smooth face of Jacob gives him a more youthful appearance than his census-paper would warrant the sub-enumerator in expecting. Altogether, the tall figure, and graceful carriage, and chiselled features are not to be mistaken. They are familiar to every one who has visited the photographic studios of Melbourne as those of the most popular preacher of the city, the Rev. Charles Clark.



Mr. Clark *is* eloquent. So many preachers are praised for qualities not their own, that it is of importance to be explicit on the fact. To know what is meant by "word-painting" one must listen to him. The vivid, thrilling force of language itself, the manner in which an idea or an incident may be placed before an audience with startling distinctness, with attractive loveliness, with stereoscopic reality ; how, after all, a new phrase remains to throw a side light over the scene—the power, the poetry of the English tongue ;—all this remains to be appreciated by Melbourne church-goers until they have sat under Mr. Clark. There is something very fascinating, particularly to the trained ear, in the mingled grace and steadiness of his flights. He breaks out into images and illustrations as naturally and as profusely as a peach tree blossoms or a lark swells into song. And his vivid metaphors, often gay, always appropriate, and gathered from every source—nature, history, poetry, and the sciences—are given in transparent language. Every one can understand them. Like as shells in the clear depths of the sea, they acquire a fresh beauty from the crystal medium through which they are viewed. The voice is in harmony with the language—clear as a clarion, and with a metallic ring. And the preacher's control over word and tongue are as great the one as the other. The voice becomes a very potent instrument with him ; reading acquires a new value.

A good many Melbourne ministers ought to be put to school to Mr. Clark to learn how to quote, and particularly, how to give out hymns. If encores were allowed at the end of a verse, some of his hearers would be terribly tempted to forego the prayers and the singing and the sermon, and cry, "Go on reading sacred poetry for ever, Mr. Clark ;" for at these times his trembling inflexions will thrill the audience, or his voice will die away like the dissolving notes of distant music. Yes and certainly ! There are all the outward and

visible signs of a great orator about the Albert-street preacher. It would be difficult, without being interested in the subject, to help being gratified by the charm of his delivery. If one pulpit orator in early days was called the "golden-lipped," Mr. Clark might be well termed the silver-tongued.

Much of the minister's preaching is in a conversational strain, Mr. Clark buttonholing his audience, as it were, questioning them, and taking them into his confidence. Very delightful conversation it is—no rush, no gabble—the matter always lively, and often including a well-told anecdote of real life. As for the poets of the day, the speaker is so imbued with them that their verses ooze from his tongue. Some actors sleep on their parts, to catch their spirit as they say, and one would imagine that Mr. Clarke pillowed his head on the neat green and gilt editions which issue from Moxon's press. Interrogated and catechised as you are by the minister, you never wish to interrupt the flow. The Church-goer looks round the building and sees attention everywhere. Only two pairs of eyes did he ever behold closed. The one were owned by an energetic deacon, whose complacent stroking of his beard showed that he had but shut the bodily eyes to enjoy more keenly the preacher's imagery with the mental vision. The gifted Bourdaloue was accustomed to preach with his eyelids dropped, to avoid distraction, and his portraits were always taken with them thus compressed, and there can be no objection to a deacon following so illustrious an example. Still, as a concession to the weaker and easily-scandalised brethren, the rule of stroking the beard, as a sign of wakefulness, ought to be insisted upon. The second pair were in the choir, and the choir is a privileged body everywhere, and what it does is the business of nobody. It is to be noted that his colloquial form of address often betrays the preacher into almost slangy expressions. They jar sadly. Mr. Clark is

not natural—is quite out of his element in using them. We seem to see the swan ashore, and want to get it back to the water again. He is at his ease most in fine phrases.

Mr. Clark is, however, essentially a dramatic preacher. On that character his reputation is founded. Often every word has its action. His attitudes, never the same for a minute, are often picturesque, always graceful. He bends the bow and fits the arrows and draws the sword; he gives the counterfeit presentment of the grumbler whose tone he is mimicking. Were he to describe the cockcrow and St. Peter's fall, he would hide his face to stifle his cries. "I'd give all the money of a benefit night to handle my handkerchief as that fellow does," exclaimed Garrick, when sitting under Whitfield; and the actors of our day might study nature and grace from Mr. Clark. His reading-desk, by placing a large space at his disposal, gives him an advantage over the cribbed, cabined, and confined occupants of the wretched pulpit-boxes of our forefathers, and he turns it to good account. He fills the space, now in the middle, now on this side, now on that, like a "star" actor occupies the entire stage, no matter who else may be upon it. The audience can never ignore him. In manner and address—in style—he rises above his compeers of the cloth, not like one bough does over another, but as the mountain tops the forest.

The turn from the form of the addresses to their substance is abrupt and severe, but it has to be made. And the verdict must be recorded, however reluctantly, that, as literary compositions, Mr. Clark's sermons are far too often vague, loose, and flabby. The charm of the gift is all in its manner. The little nothing is wrapt up in tinsel paper, and presented with such a grace and impressment, that the hearer feels the obligation of one who has received a treasure. But Mr. Clark should never publish one of his

ordinary discourses. The press would be a fatal talisman. Spoken by him, his addresses reflect all the light and shade of his eloquence, as the jellyfish, floating on the surface of the sea, does the colours of the rainbow.' When we come to coldly dissect both, we find a common fault; they want a backbone. There is a lack in the sermon of tangible facts, solid thoughts, weighty ideas. Glitter does not compensate for their absence. All of his addresses are ethical, many are ethical alone. The text is from the Bible; the middle might be taken from a magazine. By what mysterious process the preacher links the one to the other, and both to the benediction, is not given to ordinary logicians to comprehend, and must remain a mystery until all secrets are revealed, and the sea of the popular preacher's heart gives up its dead syllogisms. Necessarily such sermons fail to generate strong sentiment. Free from offensive dogmatism, they are free also from the decision, the firm principle, and the strong conception, always so refreshing to the weak, and they are free from the just and clear and earnest declaration, "Thus saith the Lord," of the Christian preacher. At the conclusion we feel that there has been more of ability than piety. We have been tickled rather than thrilled, the preacher has been "too clever by half." With the delivery of the sermons it is the same as their matter. In hours of reminiscence the gifted improvisatore is recalled; the impassioned orator, the self-forgetting, self-forgot utterer of divine truths, the deliverer of a divine message, never. The tones, the looks, the sighs which linger in the heart for years—these are spirits over whom the elocutionist has no control. No doubt this preacher holds some of the golden keys. He can unlock laughter, and often has to put a restraint upon himself to check the impulse and the smile. That he can

"Ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears,"

very few will believe. To make others weep, says the Latin proverb, you must weep yourself. With all his powers of rhetoric, and imagery, and action, was ever a sob of contrition heard in his chapel? Had he drifted to the stage, the highest walk there, tragedy, heaven-crowned, "weeping tears and blood," could hardly have been his *forte*. It would be strange now to hear him speak "as a dying man to dying men."

From him who has received much, much is expected. With all popular preachers there is this issue—to what end are their talents applied? Has the man a mission to fulfil, a charge to deliver? or, does he misuse the high place, and the sacred position to glorify himself; to intercept the homage due to the Maker, even as the sons of Eli defiled the Holy of Holies:

" Will he seek to dazzle me with tropes
As with the diamond on his lily hand,
And play his brilliant parts before my eyes
When I am hungering for the bread of life?"

On this question hang all the law and all the prophets. It must be put after hearing Mr. Clark, for it cannot be denied, it would be affectation for any one to conceal, that he arouses the suspicion. The doubt is founded on a misapprehension of the preacher's talents. A great preacher he is, but not of the greatest. A man of brilliant, showy parts, but not of creative and sympathetic powers. The distinction is often overlooked, but it is of vital importance. It is the secret of a disproportion between Mr. Clark's show and Mr. Clark's results. Even in the midst of his vivid word-colouring and his elegant action, in the height of his bursts and bravuras one starts. The features of eloquence are there, the soul is wanting. The inward fire which would inform every gesture with a new meaning, and render luminous every sentence, has not been lit. By nature he lacks

that which gives talent all its edge, all its weight, all its momentum—the wrapt enthusiasm of the devotee. He is what he is ; the popular preacher, the favourite of the hour, the pet of piety's dress circle. Lo, religion in the Albert-street Chapel, "thou art unto men as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice."

How finally describe Mr. Clark save by his own imagery? The eagle, beating with steady pinions against the storm ; the nightingale, delighting men by its plaintive melody ; the dove, soaring on the "seraph wings of ecstasy," must be dismissed. Rather is he one of our own native lyre-birds, repeating every note it hears, and displaying with conscious pride every feather of its brilliant plumage. With regret we find the silver voice has ceased ; but the appeal it has made has been to our admiration, not to our hearts. The audience have had held up a pleasing picture for their contemplation, rather than a truth-telling glass to make them "tremble while they gaze," causing them to loathe the guilty form they know to be their own. They are apt to leave, not with tremulous thought of themselves, nor yet with chastened hopes of the future, but pleased with a preacher who is so admirable ; pleased with themselves for having the intelligence and taste to appreciate his merits. Admiration Mr. Clark will have wherever he goes. It is his right, and will be acknowledged. Energetic, able, and conscious of his ability, he is sure of crowded chapels in whatever place his lot may be cast, and pitted against whatever rivals. But it is a safe prophecy to predict that the fruit will be in poor proportion to the leaf. Admirers will be many, and converts few. His is the lustre, but the reflected, heatless lustre of the moon ; the lightning, but the forkless, lambent flame from earth ; the crystal, but not the "sea of glass with the fire in it ;" the winged words, but not "to the dividing of body and spirit asunder." To Martha much was given, but there was one

thing needful. Mr. Clark's want is the same. It is the heart of flame. And only that can tip the tongue with fire.

Gentle reader, a postscript. A faithful notice of Mr. Clark includes a glance at his defects. Think thou of all that warns against a harsh judgment, and of all that calls for palliation and praise. His shortcomings, they are those of nine preachers out of ten, yea, ninety-nine in the hundred. They would pass unnoticed but for his heaven-sent gifts. The strong light deepens the shadows. In the youth of the world men were more generous than in these latter ages. They did not expect perfection. They made a god of the man who possessed any one talent in an heroic degree. Hercules was not blamed for his want of wit, nor Apollo for his lack of strength. Imitate thou them, rather than the present many, the vulgar, the envious herd, who remember only the weak points of a great man, and fancy that those frailties reduce him to their own low level.



ST. MARY'S, HOTHAM.

PEOPLE who believe that the Anglican church can draw congregations only from the extremes of society—the classes who are too fashionable to care much, and the people too ignorant to know much—may learn a lesson by visiting the growing pile known as St. Mary's, Hotham. Here, lavender and lace, the modern substitutes for purple and fine linen, are unknown, nor do chariot wheels tarry, nor buggies linger outside the portals. The assemblage is one of decent men and women, struggling, evidently, for their daily livelihoods, puzzled, a good many of them, how to make both ends meet, able to appreciate in their inmost hearts the lines that declare “the trivial round, the common task” furnish all the trials the most fervid need require—give more space than the “cloistered cell” for the sacrifice which is Christian, and the self-denial which is divine. They sing the verse often, for their pastor sits at the feet of Keble, and next to the inspired poetry of the Psalms, one can imagine him placing the consecrated melodies of the “Christian Year.” A congregation it is of foot soldiers in the battle of life. Its minister can be no spectator on the hill side. He is a standard-bearer in the midst of the fray, and vice, apathy, heartlessness, and misery are his foes, instead of theologic heresy. Worldly honour is not to be obtained in the strife, but victory is. The church building itself is large and cold and cadaverous, devoid of ornamentation, and a trial in its barrenness to a minister who is possessed of æsthetic tastes and a weakness for symbolism, nor does there seem any prospect of a mitigation of its severity. Bazaars are going on, but the energies of the maidens who toil and smile there are still devoted to



obtaining means for bare accommodation. This growth of building, and increase of numbers in a neighbourhood which seems at first glance the rightful property of dissent, has taken place under the pastorship of one man—the Rev. Robert Potter, the subject of our sketch.

In dealing with his preaching only, a critic takes but a minor part of Mr. Potter. It is judging a man by a limb, a temple by a stone. To do justice would be to exceed our functions, and paint not merely the Sunday preacher, but the Parish Priest. In the pulpit Mr. Potter is greatly hampered. In the first place, the circumstances of his charge prevent any attractive intellectual flights. To delight the head cannot be his mission ; he must aim steadily at the heart. The second is a personal difficulty. He has to struggle against a peculiar voice, the voice of one crying in the wilderness—pitched in a high key, to which one has to become accustomed, as to the eating of olives. Turning to his subject matter, a critic cannot fail to note that, like every other Anglican clergyman, and Presbyterian clergyman likewise, he falls into an error the Wesleyans and the Roman Catholics are sedulous to avoid. He preaches *at* his congregation rather than *from* them. In fact, Mr. Potter does not preach at all, but reads ; the inevitable manuscript creates once more an obstacle between the preacher's and the hearer's heart, and wherever it is there effective oratory is not. For this shortcoming his communion is answerable. His church has abandoned the grand art of Paul, of Chrysostom, of Whitfield, and of Hall. It has discarded the graces of delivery and manner ; has lost the art of extempore speaking ; has stripped the rose of its veil of moss, taken from the arrow its barb, robbed oratory of half its power, and all its edge. Eloquence has been replaced in its pulpits by rhetoric ; and zeal, where it exists, is arbitrarily toned down to classical correctness.

Preachers of Mr. Potter's class cannot absolutely and imperatively command attention, as do the Cæsars of speech, the men whose matured conception and definite ideas are fused in the passionate inspiration of the moment. But—and here Mr. Potter is a representative man—they can well repay the hearer who gives his mind. There is substance in his sermons; and substance which can take and which receives a polish. Few men put so much matter in their discourses, so much brain-work, and fewer still point so much their language and simplify so much their illustrations, so as to be “understood of the people.” It was this polish of composition, the Church-goer remembers, which surprised most his London reviewers; for Mr. Potter has published, and ought to publish still more. No one has more to gain by coming before the public in type—cold, cruel, but truthful type, where the charms of delivery are not, where, as in marble statuary, colour and gesture vanish, but bone and muscle, the strength and elegance of substance, tell. His English critics expected, apparently, a loose, rapid flow of fervid imagery from an Australian minister, and they found the terseness, the compressed energy, and the simplicity of long studied compositions. The very simplicity of the discourses spoke to these judges of the minister's conscientious toil, for the initiated know that clearness has but one price, and that is labour. All literature repeats the tale. Of Macaulay's essays there is none like that on Byron for flowing ease, for playful touches, for perpetual lucidity. It is the one which most taxed its writer; where he put forth all his powers. In nature the result is the same. The most rapid motion, and the revolving wheel seems to stir not; the perfection of flight, and the albatross floats where the pigeon whirrs; the greatest heat, it is invisible. At this white heat are many of Mr. Potter's sermons beaten out.

With the pastor of St. Mary's may be mentioned the name of the preacher of the Scots' Church. The two men are diverse and yet alike, different in opinion, one in fervour. Mr. Potter clings to those High Church dogmas which have for ever become incredible to the thought that leads the world and shapes its destinies. Mr. Menzies is a leader in that theology of the future, the Broad Church of the day, to which mankind turns a willing ear. There is not the difference between the two schools in practice there is in theory. Both belong to the mystics ; that is, both abjure a frigid theology framed on the assumption that Christianity is a code of civil laws. Robertson of Brighton, from whom the Broad Church preachers borrow their passionate softness, their hatred of distinctions, their love of the mist which spiritualises the landscape, was ordained and licensed by Bishop Wilberforce, the High Church leader, and was at least once invited to join the High Church ranks. Mr. Potter and Mr. Menzies belong each to the nobler sections of their parties. One bond unites them—it is their enthusiasm in a common cause. They are preachers of the earnest, the natural, the apostolic type ; men wrapped up in their message ; seeking only to do justice to that ; striving only how to place that before the hearer in the most striking form. They are transparent mediums, so far that is, as mediums can be transparent. If we linger on their tones, their looks, their phrases, it is by an effort of our own will. Herbert describes them in his “ Elixir ”—

“ A man that looks on glass,
On it may stay his eye,
Or if he pleaseth through it pass,
And there the Heaven espy.”

Mr. Menzies is without comparison, and for many reasons, the greater orator. He adds to the same love of truth, the same abandonment to a task, a keen delight for an

impassioned argumentation. He scents the controversy afar off. From the "lofty watch-tower of his pulpit" he discerns the approach and spread of infidelity, and his note is the clamorous sound of the alarm bell. His is the eager spirit of a Paul,

"The fiery soul, which working out its way,
Fretteth the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er informs its tenement of clay."

Mr. Potter's is the patience of a John. The one is the torrent bearing everything before it, the other the stream fertilising a thousand plains. The one sends our thoughts inward, the other raises the eyes to the skies. The one is arrayed for battle against the giant, with the stones in his sling; the mission of the other is to feed the flock. Both are "whole burnt offerings." With both the heart muses, the fire burns, and the tongue speaks. They stand before the people as the seraph Abdiel addressed the host, "wrapped in a flame of holy zeal severe." They are free from egotism; a thrice-blessed deliverance. Never, you feel sure, will the pulpit be turned by them into an advertising van, nor the sermon transformed into a placard of personal qualifications. Both would shrink with loathing from aught that would call attention from the truth to its propounder; from deliberate word-painting; from the flaunting of knowledge; from dimming the light; from obscuring the glory of the divine, from kindling with fires from hell the sacrifice they dedicate to heaven. They make, though in different degree, what Johnson declared the hardest sacrifice of all, namely, a voluntary descent from the dignity of the scholar. Such men reap scant honour in their own day. Not theirs the "vain wonder of applauding fools." Their hope and purpose can be but to live in the minds their exhortations have trained; the hearts their appeals have softened.

Pulpit oratory of this class fails to dazzle the multitude ; it deceives the cultivated too often by its very conditions. They do not recognise under the simplicity of the language the value and importance of the thought ; the weightiness of the ideas. And yet if preaching is to be judged by its results—and surely it has no other standard—this preaching is the highest of all. It tickles not the ear, but it sinks into men's hearts. You may hear florid declamation, and loose disquisition, and strings of paradoxes comparatively often. The preacher who stands nearly alone in his moral grandeur is he who earnestly strives to make his audience feel what he feels, who devotes himself to that alone. The gift that is rare is that of throwing the sympathies of an ardent nature into the spoken words, and making them instinct with life. Here lies the secret of the success Mr. Potter has achieved in his parish. Men when they leave his church do not crowd the doors to express admiration of the preacher's imagery, to praise his tones, or extol his gestures. No, there is a higher tribute than that. When they commune together they say like those of old, "did not our hearts burn within us as he opened to us the Scriptures?"

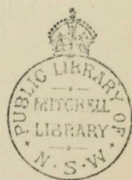
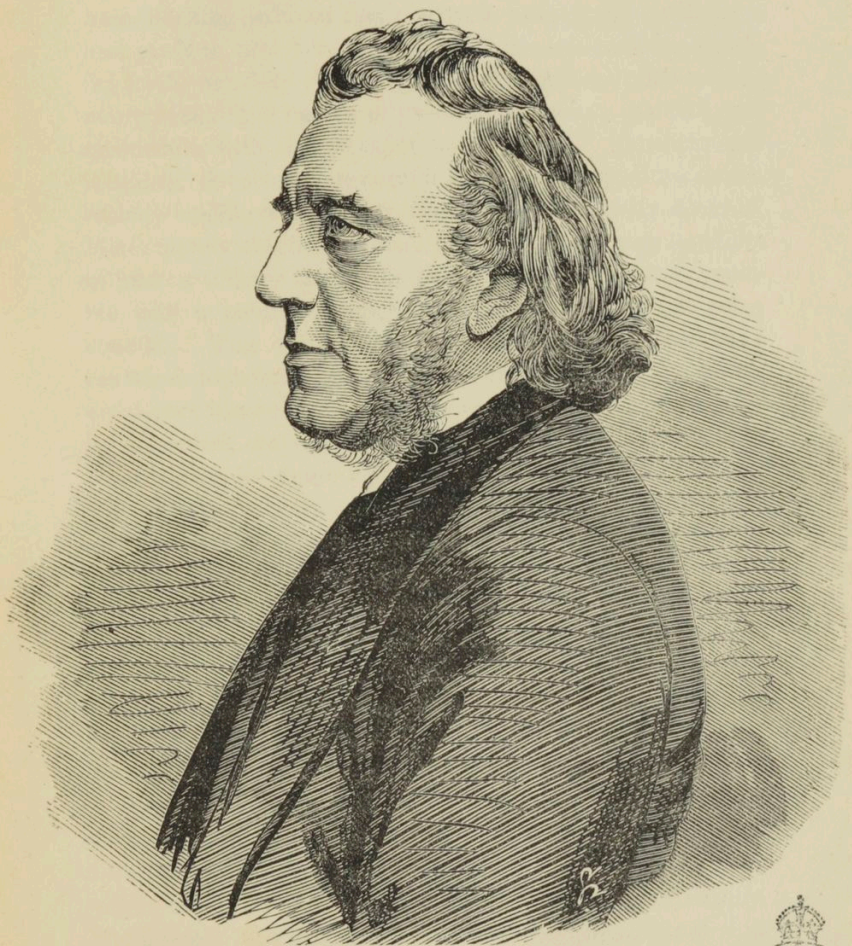


CHALMERS' CHURCH.

THE Pilgrim Fathers who erected Chalmers' Church were very far from being devotees of display. Rigid simplicity, the plainest of plain bluestone, satisfied these contented beings. They erected a building which is like Melrose Abbey, in that it should be viewed by moonlight, or better still, when there is no moon at all. In truth, the "decent spire"—poetry for an architectural fright, would be in place fronting a village green, but is hardly in keeping with the beautiful metropolitan reserves surrounding the edifice. There is much to be said against spending money in beautifying the temple while men and women, "the buildings not made with hands," go destitute of spiritual and material food; but for all that, poverty in a building when the congregation is not poverty-stricken, jars. People who object to the one expenditure don't incur the other, just as the disciple who, the evangelist records, with a fine sarcasm, "kept the money bags" was the one to protest against the waste of ointment on the feet of the Saviour. Chalmers' Church was erected, of course, before prosperity had set in upon the colony; before the congregation could maintain two eminent ministers; and to caution, therefore, and not to meanness, must be ascribed the disproportion between the edifice and its site. These remarks will apply when the day for rebuilding comes. May it be near at hand, for the splendid site is worthy of a splendid pile.

Apart from the beauties of the landscape there is a pleasant spectacle visible from the entrance steps of Chalmers' Church,

"When the sweet chimes proclaim the hallowed day,"



the spectacle Coleridge declared to be the fairest on earth ; that of the hastening to the kirk of "old men and young, and loving friends." These family groups are visible from here, flocking in from every suburb, dotting the park lands and gardens, now lost amid the shrubberies, and now standing forth, wending their way through winding paths to the many Melbourne houses of praise and prayer ; the air laden meanwhile with the pleasant noise of bells. The stranger would be deceived, however, if he imagined that the silver melody which fills the ear comes from Chalmers' Church. He is merely indebted to that for the curious note he starts to hear, a solitary clang like that of a bag-pipe tocsin, audible with a painful distinctness in the midst of all other sounds. The charge of that particular bell has been confided to a muscular Christian who does his duty by his employers irrespective of a suffering society. His zeal is to be respected, the regret being that a more melodious instrument cannot be found to display his powers. Once inside, and the visitor finds that Chalmers' Church boasts a large-sized hall and a large congregation. The numbers hastening to the edifice, the occasional carriages rolling in, proclaim the church at once the central Presbyterian church of the city. Neither is there any mistaking the character of the worshippers. It is a wealthy, an influential, a shrewd, satisfied, and sedate congregation. Leaders in society are here, and leaders in politics. Rising professional men, and sure bank managers. The seed sown will produce its fruit in high and practical places ; the lights kindled will be shown on beacon spots in society. Wealth without ostentation, fashion without display, youth without levity are to be witnessed. Not one over-dressed person, not one shabby. The poorest man in the building is as decently apparelled as the richest ; the struggling mother has her bairns as well kempt as the carriage children. But why paint the

congregation in phrases? It may be described in a word, and that will be a word of praise. It is "Scotch."

The church, it has been stated, enjoys the services of two ministers. The senior pastor, the Rev. Dr. Cairns, is now partly resting from his labours. Who in Melbourne does not know his upright figure, towering and erect like an Alpine pine, his rugged countenance furrowed like a mountain top, and like it crowned with snow, the clear blue eye and the genial smile, all waiting to give the world assurance of a man. Nearly as familiar is he in the pulpit. One of the Cyclops was he there; the giant race possessed of only one eye, while two are required for perfect mental as for perfect bodily vision, but that one a burning orb, and placed in the middle of the forehead. A hard hitter, but never wincing nor whining under the return blow. Free from the reproach of the church of Laodicea and of the church of this day—the sin of being neither hot nor cold; by no means free from what Jeremy Taylor calls the plain and manifest work of the devil—the being so in love with one's own opinions as to call them Heaven's. A man who preached best and prayed best when anger was aroused, the divine anger of one who could say, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, which hate Thee." His wrath was forgotten by the controversialist with the occasion; the guilty sinner cowered and trembled before it. A man to be loved also by little children. It is a spiritual lesson in itself to see him entering the church with the step and bearing of the antlered monarch of the forest, looking round with the noble confidence, the gracious dignity of the minister of the Word. A dozen texts rise spontaneous to the mind of the glory of the hoary head, and of the loving mercy shown to the righteous and their seed for ever. It will be a pleasing pain some other day to describe the "old man eloquent" still occupying the pulpit of his manhood. The sight of

the sun setting to renew its rays is always sublime and affecting, and a sunset like this is more noble than Tasso has sung or Claude painted.

This time we have to deal with Dr. Cairns's coadjutor and successor, the Rev. Andrew Cameron. Picturesque as the senior minister's appearance is in the pulpit, his fellow-labourer's is something more. The ladies call it romantic, and the men singular. If he would but introduce a little more fire into his features, the preacher might sit as a model for one of the enthusiast divines who stood by the covenant ; defied the rack and the sword ; and with the dragoons of Dalziel of Claverhouse in sight, broke the bread of life or raised the psalm of victory on the hill side. Such visions as these are recalled to mind by the outward man of Mr. Cameron. The inward man, however, has absolutely nothing of the fanatic. There is tenfold as much of the veritable "soldier" of the church about his fellow-labourer. Instead of a natural impulse to vehement controversy or to doctrinal disputes, Mr. Cameron when in the pulpit is more to "gentle melancholy tuned." Some preachers and some writers have all their geniality in their sermons or their writings. They exhaust their stock of good nature there. With Mr. Cameron it is the very opposite. He is known as the most genial of visiting clergymen ; his private qualities endear him to his flock ; and yet a curious plaintiveness pervades the whole of his discourse. He seldom shakes himself altogether free from its influence, and he readily falls into the ever-present temptation of adopting a lachrymose style in his prayers. It is recorded of one preacher that he could make his congregation either laugh or weep by the manner in which he pronounced the word Mesopotamia, and Mr. Cameron has nearly arrived at the tear-producing stage. One is reminded, by the "dying fall" in his tone, of Robert Hall, who was taught to read off the gravestones in a cemetery.

As a preacher, Mr. Cameron belongs to a class which, whether for good or evil, has been smitten by the inexorable law of decay. They studied life in the Bible. Their successors are bringing the Bible into life. Their mission was hardly what John Angell James was accustomed to describe as his—"the direct conversion of souls," but rather to instruct and edify the souls who were already converted. Their information was encyclopædiac. Egypt and Galilee, prophet, bard, and apostle, time, circumstance, and place, stood revealed in their discourses—often picturesque when genius preached, and often tedious when less ability occupied the pulpit. They were the Walter Scotts of the church; the men who re-clothed the past; while the strength and the weakness of the new men is their eagerness to penetrate the mysterious future. In form and substance Mr. Cameron belongs to the former section; possessed of their merits, and not avoiding their errors. His best sermons, the critic would say, are his historical, where he describes the familiar life of Bible characters; paints the manners of the patriarchs, or of the Nazarenes, or tells the terrors of the plague—"the darkness that could be felt," "the fire that ran along the ground;" linking the centuries that are gone with to-day by an "application" at the close, always solemn, and often effective. Of necessity, his subject-matter descends at times to the trivialities of Bible lore. The Church-goer has heard him preach for well-nigh an hour on a point concerning which different commentators had expressed different opinions. As all of them were orthodox men, the question may, with every appearance of safety, be set down as one of trivial importance. It was actually John the Baptist's motive in sending a message to the Saviour. Mr. Cameron has, with wonderful assiduity and apparently deep study arrived at another view, equally orthodox and alike creditable

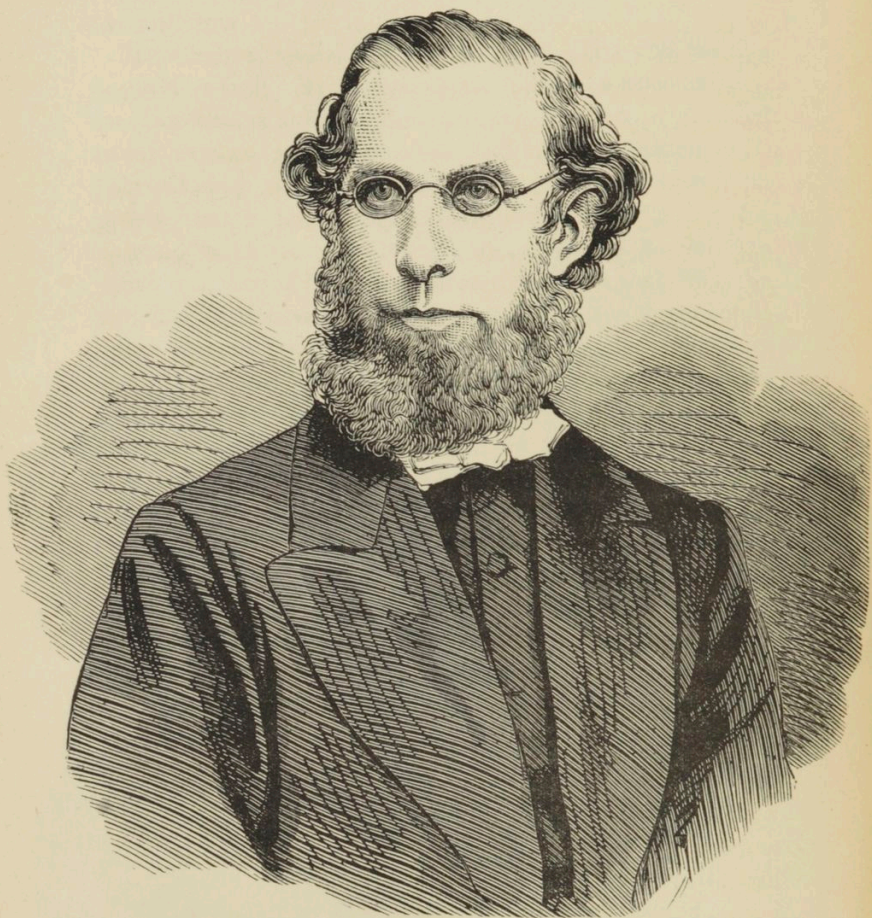
to his head and his heart. His argument was admirable—stated with singular clearness and perfect method. There were three lawyers in front of the Church-goer who were absorbed in it, and checking it off mentally. If the preacher failed to draw an angel from heaven, like the “sweet enthusiast” Cecilia, like Timotheus he raised these mortals to the skies. Only one thing would have been needful to complete their satisfaction—that was to take counsel’s opinion on the point. By most other preachers the information would have been afforded at the Sunday School or the Bible Class, or probably not at all. It irresistibly reminded the stranger of the speculations of the schoolmen—the problem, for instance, of Thomas Aquinas, how many angels could stand on the point of a needle.

Mr. Cameron can of course preach very different sermons to this; can utter earnest calls to repentance, or solemnly unveil the world to come; but his set is towards the elucidation and the interpretation of the letter of the Scriptures. Preachers of this class linger on the actual deeds the men of the Bible performed, rather than the deeds the Spirit would in this day urge such men to attempt; on the swine into which the devils entered, rather than the passions they now subvert; on the money-changers who were driven out of the temple, rather than the vices awaiting ejection. They fail to see with the clearness of the more modern men what Coleridge describes, in allusion to the life of Luther, as the essential difference between a practical mind and an unpractical mind,—namely, that the latter considers what Luther did, or said, or sanctioned; the former what he would do now. The want—to a stranger—in most of the discourses of the Chalmers’ Church preacher, indeed, in all sermons of his school, is a more intimate relation with the stern realities, the cruel facts of human life, of the actual battles men are fighting, their living sorrows, their trembling hopes, and

secret fears. Such preaching does not want to be less divine, but more human. The pulpit should speak, not only to men's hearts and consciences, but to their "business and bosoms" too.

Mr. Cameron possesses a fluent pen. His composition is never at fault. He has the grace also of an easy delivery. In his ethical discourses too much praise cannot be awarded to his plain and perspicuous elucidation of each article to be believed, each precept to be taught. A critic intent on noting literary defects and merits, would observe that his language lacks nerve and energy, that there are no words to "divide and rend," no sentences dipped in zeal, like the arrows of the Indians are in poison. But the preacher is right. His good taste prevents him from dragging metaphors and illustrations into discourse, and the inward passion whose natural language is imagery, is not his. And thus his success lies in his just measure of his own powers. There is nothing really so chilling to a congregation, so pernicious to a preacher, as an affected enthusiasm. Its best emblem is the blast of winter, which freezes while it roars. Mr. Cameron preaches honestly from his own heart; his congregation have the clear, strong intellect, if not the play of fancy; the weight of the wave, if not the flash of the foam. He often interests, and never offends. He is a thoroughly trained Scotch minister.





COLLINS-STREET BAPTIST CHAPEL.

OF the congregations which stream out of church and chapel into Collins-street, one of the largest is that of the elegant Baptist chapel where the Rev. James Martin ministers. And no louder "joyful noise" is to be heard on this Eastern Hill of Zion than greets the loiterer while passing the edifice. Mr. Martin has certainly gathered the best, the heartiest of singing congregations in town about him. To hear them raise the "Rock of Ages" or the "Crowned Lord of all," the organ doing its best, the choir rivalling the instrument, the congregation resolutely declining to be outdone, their zeal tainted, moreover, by no nasal twang, is a treat to those who exult in musical fervour. It is as if the hills clapped their hands together, or as the roll of the nearer waters. The sound speaks volumes. When the lungs are vigorous and healthy, there is a reasonable inference that the heart is in its right place also. Good Minister Poundtext despaired at once of the Covenanters when he heard their miserable quaver at Bothwell Bridge, and contrasted it with the glowing psalmody which had preceded the victory at Drumclog. Here he would have no cause for fear, unless it was for the roof of the building. One bad habit the congregation has not avoided, and one which attaches to most assemblages accustomed to listen to extempore prayer. The supplications of the minister find not a worshipper in the attitude of devotion. The text that at the name of names "every knee shall bow," has no realisation here, and indeed in few other places. 'Tis a stiff-kneed, if not a stiff-necked generation. In this chapel a good proportion of the heads are thrown back when devotion is offered, while the eyes are neither directed inwards nor raised to the

heavens. They are fixed eagerly, and even critically, on the minister. A subject for discussion is involved in the question, is this prayer?

Mr. Martin's own appearance is prepossessing. His sharply-cut features, deep-set eyes, and development of the particular feature which phrenologists associate with genius, arrest attention. His officiating dress is the apparel of ordinary life, its neatness and decent hue speaking the minister of the Word; the absence of robes or bands or copes of earthly insignia, declaring that he receives his investiture direct from the Master whose cause he preaches—that he would deem the interposition of human hands, or mortal agency, a sully of the trust he has received from heaven.

There is a curious modesty about Mr. Martin's deportment, amounting almost to a shyness. Despite his pulpit practice, he often seems not thoroughly at home before his audience. Until he has warmed with his sermon, a peculiarity like that of the amateur clings to him. In the early part of the service he is disappointing; you can discover no reason for his great reputation; there is a stiffness and constraint in his manner, unusual even in the pulpit, and both when he prays and when he reads he has far too much of the conventional measured drawl of certain words associated with inanimate piety; with the idea, that to be spiritual you must be stupid; that the God of nature is served by being unnatural; that what is wanted in the pulpit is a yard-stick. In the same manner, he has a weakness for adopting the artificial divisions of the sermons into parts, and gives us his firstly, secondly, and thirdly; approaches his subject sideways, as well as directly; throws cross lights upon it; retains the formula of the past generation. In the morning discourse the defect is more particularly observable, because then the preacher confines himself

to a strict and studied arrangement of thought. In the evening he addresses a more mixed audience ; his connexion becomes more loose ; he gives more room to declamation, illustration, and imagery ; addresses at once the understanding and the heart ; endeavours, not only to convince the hearer, but to make him feel. And these are the moments when Mr. Martin does himself justice. They change the man. Instead of a formalist, we have a fervid speaker before us. It is not given him to move the passions, but he can put obscure truths in a novel light ; he cannot agitate, but he can enchain.

It is really pleasurable to see Mr. Martin warm, like he always does as he advances with his address. He casts off the frigidity which at first has chilled his hearers. His action becomes free, and even forcible. His voice rings at these times. His words are winged, his sentences terse and homely, keen as lances, and with a barb. The love breaks out for antitheses and epigram, common to men who feel warmly, and see quick and see true. You cannot mistake your man. "Be honest if you would be eloquent," said Faust before his fall, and you feel the honesty, the intentness, the concentrated energy of the preacher. There is a peculiar freshness, and charm, and energy in perfect sincerity, and it is his. There is life in the frank expression of a man's own mind ; Mr. Martin has this vitality. It breaks through the bondage of drawl, and raises him from the slavery of drivel. It goes further to win the confidence of some men than the most vehement outpouring of imagination and passion ; for the heat which softens iron hardens clay. The question wells up impulsively—why is not Mr. Martin always natural? The conventionalisms he sometimes affects are antique, are dead, and it is the law of nature that the dead should be buried. Why cumber these tones, these affectations the ground, now that they have long ceased to be sweet and

wholesome? When he has finally burst the chains, and rent the garments of a pedantic and frigid school—got quit of its mannerism—Mr. Martin will pray like a man, and preach like a man, and something more. Should ever the event happen, the preacher will be surprised at his own increase of pulpit power. At present he is like the new wine poured into old bottles. He has not much to learn, he has only to be true to himself; but he has something to forget.

A word in this particular article on the subject of delivery will be a word to the wise. Most surprising indeed is it that unnaturalness in tone and diction, driven away elsewhere, should still linger in the pulpit. They do mischief there. It is the “little rift within the lute” that soon does silence all. This mechanical tameness of delivery, this drawl, this conventional language—the “shop-talk” of piety—first annoy men and then disgust. Church-goers want the same living vigour in the pulpit as elsewhere, and, more than that, the same charms of address. It is not sufficient that ministers should be able to read the Word in the Greek; they must also be able to preach it in the vulgar tongue, so that their congregations shall in truth hear them gladly. Unfortunately for themselves and their cause, the very ministers who labour most to obtain knowledge are too often those who on the mode of imparting it with clearness and force bestow no pains at all. It is as if years should be spent in hewing the marble for the building, and no attempt made to arrange the blocks for beauty and strength. They abandon the charm of delivery to the empty mimic, or to the mere improvisatore, and yet it was the weapon of a Chrysostom and an Augustine among the Fathers; a Bossuet and a Lacordaire in the French Church; a Hall and a Whitfield in our own. There is a lesson to be derived from the service in the Sanctuary. The vessels

used therein were of gold, yea, burnished gold ; weight without lustre is lead.

Of the preacher's subject-matter it is mere justice to speak in the highest terms. Few men—nay none—put more thought, more earnestness into their sermons. They are free altogether from the “waterishness” which is the radical defect of the sermons of the day. Behind all his verbiage there is the strong and the cultured intellect—one of those intellects which have taken a polish in proportion to their solidity. Mr. Martin's published works declare him a scholar familiar with the German theological literature of the day. He is enabled thereby, when occasion requires, to meet the rationalist on his own ground ; to confute him as David slew Goliath—with his own sword. He seldom strays, however, into controversial paths. His labours are directed to making his hearers devout men rather than expert controversialists. His strong hold in the affection of his people is that no one “preaches Christ” more, no one sets before a congregation more clearly and more persuasively, the duties, the morals, the motive of the Gospels. He goes back to the fountain head, and is more a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth, than Saul of Tarsus. “Paul,” he declared in a recent sermon, “was a Christian before he knew the doctrines of the faith.” “The mistake of Roman Catholics,” he said in the same discourse, “is placing the crucifix in lieu of the cross ; the error of the Protestant is substituting a creed for Christ.” On this basis does the preacher build. The religion he preaches is that of “living soberly, righteously, and godly in the world.” “To do the Father's will,” that is the preacher's saving doctrine ; that is the message, he holds, was sent from heaven, and sealed on Calvary with blood. One of those men is he who object “to dwell alone.” With a simple fervour which goes home, he invites “members of other churches” to remain and

join at the communion table. That branch of the Church Catholic whose ideal is Christian unity, which remembers how vital are the points on which Christians agree, how fleeting and trivial the subjects on which they differ, claims him as a member.

Few voices are raised more loudly than this critical scholar's against the bigotry which condemns its brethren from the false exegesis of misappreciated texts. No one would shrink more from guarding a creed with terrors more consuming than the fires that burned on awful Sinai. Purity in doctrine, but charity in the interpretation of doctrine, the motto of Lacordaire, might be taken for his. He is a preacher, also, who grows upon you. Respect for the man, and admiration of his abilities, increase as you become more familiar with his services. Above all, he conveys the impression of a minister who will last. Two massive sermons a week are a severe tax to any one, no matter how marvellous may be his affluence of thought, Paley saying emphatically on this point, "If your situation requires a sermon every Sunday, make one and steal five;" but Mr. Martin steals nothing, and yet he appears equal to the strain imposed upon him. His seems no fitful flickering, feverish enthusiasm, but the tenacity and intentness of a man content to labour calmly on, with steady eye fixed upon the End.

Such preaching as Mr. Martin's ought to be fruitful in results. There must be latent heat, of course, before a fire can be kindled. Gunpowder itself will produce no explosion if flung upon ice. But the fault is with the auditor; let him distrust his own heart, if he leaves the Collins-street Baptist Chapel without carrying away some healing sting, some noble humiliation, some divine impulse treading down despair. Nor does the labourer appear to be toiling in vain. It has been said that Mr. Martin has one

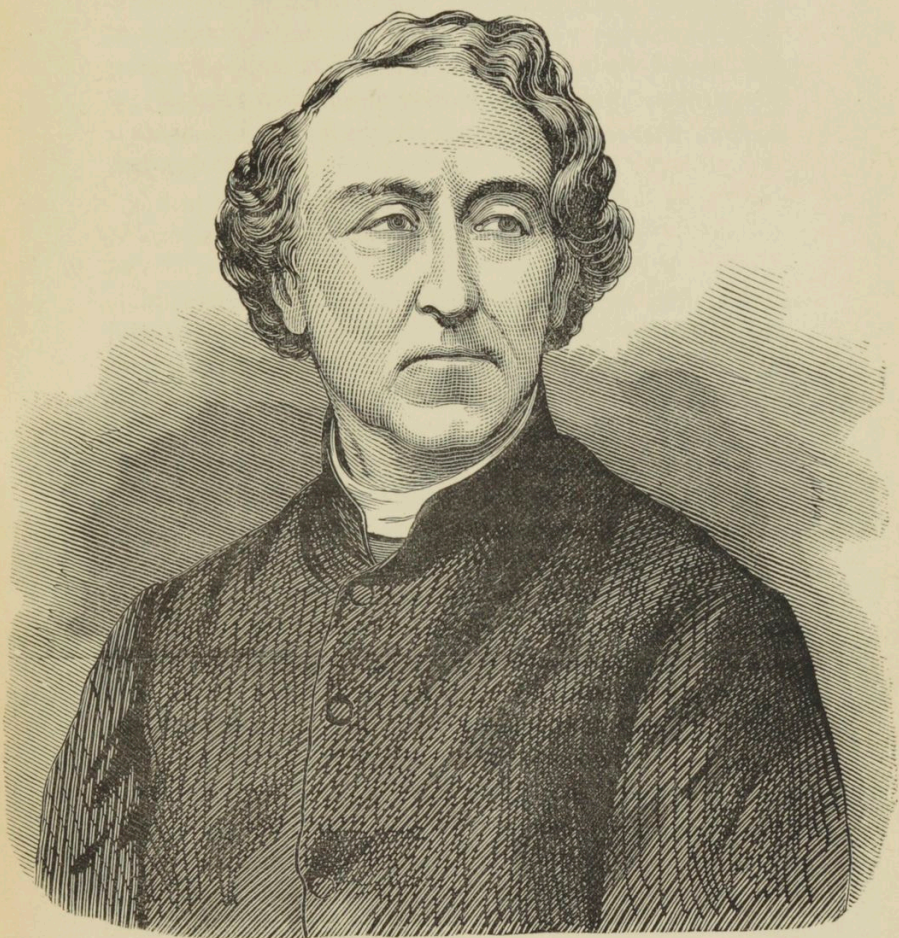
of the largest congregations on the Eastern hill. To this statement must be added that he has an unusually large proportion of communicants. Strange, indeed, will it be, and a sad day for religion, when a preacher of a strong intellect and a sanctified spirit ceases to meet with this substantial, this real, this abiding success. For, in the words of Timothy, this man has received “not the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”



ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL.

Not in a church to-day, but a cathedral—the pile which looms above Melbourne, the first object starting into sight as we approach the city from any quarter ; a structure massive, isolated, and grand, like the communion it represents. Such is St. Patrick's Cathedral. It is in its infancy just now, but the infancy is that of a giant. Already it is the wonder of the Eastern Hill, whose summit it crowns, and some time it must be its architectural pride. We may anticipate the day when the stranger, drawing rein on the Nunawading heights, or the Keilor hill ; or, as off Gellibrand's Point the liner's royals and to'gallants are reefed aloft, and the bellying canvas let fly below, will obtain his first glimpse of the double spires, and of the Lantern tower, near 350 feet in height, and will feel something of the glow of Chaucer's pilgrims when they caught sight of the "Angel Tower," rising far away at the end of Canterbury's forest vista.

At present the interior of St. Patrick's, like the exterior, is unfinished. The nave and the two aisles are near completion, but the transepts and central tower are wanting. We have a noble spectacle before us in the building as it is ; not the sober splendour, the "dim, religious light," the sombre grandeur of the earlier English cathedrals, but the airiness, the lightness, and the grace which are the charms of the perpendicular Gothic. There is one splendid tinted window, one of Hardman's best, but only one. Imagination must depict the scene as it will be when there is the glow of colour, the aid of the carved bosses and brackets, when every wall space has its painted scene from Scripture and legend, when storied panes and jewelled pyx and crucifix, and saintly effigies, and glittering shrine, shall unite in their



effort to enthrall the senses. These have to be, but one part of a cathedral there is, and the most impressive—the living congregation. The immense area, holding its thousands, is crowded at the mid-day mass; even the passages—when Father Kelly preaches at all events—will be thronged with kneeling worshippers. And what pigmies do men and women look by the sides of the massive pillars, and with the roof a hundred feet above them!

“They dreamed not of a perishable home,
Who thus could build.”

In every way does the cathedral shed a glory on its founders—and probably they will not live to claim more than that title. They will begin, but others must finish. It shows how they can rise above the prevalent meanness and littleness of the present day, the selfishness which cares not about the future, which forgets that our buildings are the tombstones of the generation, and that by them our children will stand and judge us. England received cathedrals from her struggling forefathers; Melbourne is likely, but for the builders of St. Patrick's, to send down nothing in ecclesiastical architecture but specimens of hard bargain-driving, and cheap contracting—the greatest number housed at the least possible cost; the most souls accommodated at the least expense. We build for our present wants, and forget the past and ignore the future, like the degenerate savages Goldsmith pictured, occupying turf huts, in sight of palaces, and like them wonder that “man should need the larger pile.” The Roman Catholics, true to nobler instincts, are not content to chant, “Day by day we magnify Thee, and we worship Thy name ever, world without end,” in a barn. The painfulness of the incongruity strikes them. And they, free from schism and strife, can unite for a common purpose in the cause of the Cross as other men only appear able to do in the cause

of the Dollar—a thing declared by some to be the devil, it being as easy for the author of evil to take the form of a coin as to assume the disguise of a reptile. Were this land blighted at its present stage, as Greece has been, or Spain, there would remain many magnificent temples erected in the service of Mammon. Thanks to the Roman Catholics, and them alone, there would be one temple dedicated to God.

Father Kelly occupied the pulpit of St. Patrick's on the Church-goer's visit ; and the fact gave the visit its special interest. Rome selects her tool, and uses the right instrument for the right purpose ; the edged tool to cut, and the heavy to drive. This priest toils in the parish, that dazzles in the pulpit. Father Kelly is the orator chosen in Melbourne when the Church has to show that her right hand still possesses its cunning ; that her preaching has lost neither its passion, its picturesqueness, nor its power. He is the controversialist called upon to confute error in the lecture-hall, and win ringing applause from fiery partisans ; or the comforter, when solemn occasion offers, whose whispered words on consecrated ground will shake the soul to tears. Small in figure, not robust in physique, Father Kelly yet bears the burden bravely. No weary Titan is he, staggering under the "too vast orb of his fate." The "strong man eager to run his race," does not describe him. We must imagine the enthusiast with the idea of victory itself lost in the cause ; a man all zeal and fire ; a born advocate ; an orator of the fluent fervid type. Like most effective speakers, he has natural disadvantages to overcome. His voice is mean, deficient in volume, inclined indeed, to be harsh and stringy ; his person lacks massiveness and dignity, but the man himself overbears every obstacle, like the mountain torrent sweeps all before its flood by its avalanche impetuosity. It is a rush from source to sea with the stream, and from text to blessing with the preacher. The

whole man speaks. Eyes, and face, and hands, and body are alike agitated ; and the style, like the man, knows no rest, no repose. "He hath a devil," was said of John the Baptist, and the same might be the saying of Father Kelly. The contortions of the sybil—to borrow an illustration from Burke—are his, but his also the sybil's inspiration. His the energy, the threatenings "trembling on the verge of all we hate ;" the personal, passionate appeals, the "still small voice," the thunder, the rapid changes of a man charged with the responsibility of saving souls, and of saving them by love or by fear, no matter which, so that the brand be snatched from the burning. His sermon was preached from the gospel of the day—an excellent plan when contrasted with the system of expounding isolated texts, and one much in vogue in the Catholic churches, the priests remembering apparently with the sagacious Donne, that texts in Scripture are "like hairs in horses' tails, growing on one root of beauty and strength, but if pulled out one by one serving as springs and snares." The subject of the gospel lesson and of the sermon was the parable of the lepers, and the bulk of the oration was a contrast between the ardour shown by men to purify or adorn the body, the "sensual slave of sin," and their indifference to the more possible, more noble, more self-important task—

" To clothe the soul with light,
And make the glorious spirit bright
With heavenly grace."

The most telling portion of the discourse was its close ; a declamatory peroration evidently carefully studied, too antithetical in its structure, too felicitous and condensed in language, for an extempore effort. Much of the preacher's subject matter appeared to be brilliant improvisation, but the conclusion was art itself ; oratory *in excelsis* ; the union

of closet labour and pulpit impulse. It gave the blade its edge. Robert Hall's perorations drew his listeners to their feet. One man after another would rise until half the church would be standing. Father Kelly's was delivered with the congregation on their knees. For several minutes he enchaind their attention. The hush of awe, the stillness of expectancy, a trembling silence, at once powerful and painful, prevailed through the vast building, with its assembled thousands, while the preacher passionately exhorted the congregation to cleanse their daily lives, pictured them on their knees before another seat—the judgment throne—and prayed that on that dread day they might not, like the lepers, have “to stand afar off.” The passage was an admirable specimen of robust but polished declamation. It was the glitter of steel, the flash of the sabre at the end of a headlong charge.

Critics are nothing if not critical. The Church-goer is bound to declare that the discourse as a whole was marred by its extremely rapid delivery. Riding on the blast, as Father Kelly requires us, has its disadvantages, one of which is that we are whirled past ideas before we have grasped them. The images are blurred by their thick coming. An orator who moves thus rapidly over his ground is in constant danger of his auditors missing his points or his argument, through inability to follow him, or in moments of inattention. The remedy is either copiousness or repetition, and Father Kelly adopts the former. There is no repetition in his language, nor any tautology in his sentence, but he dwells upon his leading ideas, and reiterates them as a whole or in parts under manifold forms. Qualities which would be charms in a composition, such as point, epigram, and compression, have to be sacrificed by a preacher like Father Kelly for clearness and impressiveness in the pulpit. Or if they exist, they are no more to be

recognised in the onward press than the beauties of faces in railway carriages can be noticed in the rush of the train. Such a preacher must paint broadly. Wire-drawn arguments, unadorned sense, dry reasoning, would be wasted. Father Kelly knows this—he would not know human nature if he did not—and he acts upon his knowledge. Hence his success. All the logic of the schools was put aside by him, as a lover ignores his syllogisms when he addresses his mistress. His subject matter was purely emotional. He spoke to his people as a man would to a suicide with the bowl at his lips ; not to reason with him on the sin, but to dash the poison to the ground ; to stay and to save. The effectiveness of the address was no matter of doubt. It might not convince the understanding ; possibly, it might offend the taste ; but glistening eyes, and drawn breath, and stifled sobs, showed that the arrows had reached their mark ; that the winged words had stricken the heart ; that, unlike Sisyphus, the preacher had accomplished his task—had pushed the stone to the top of the hill.

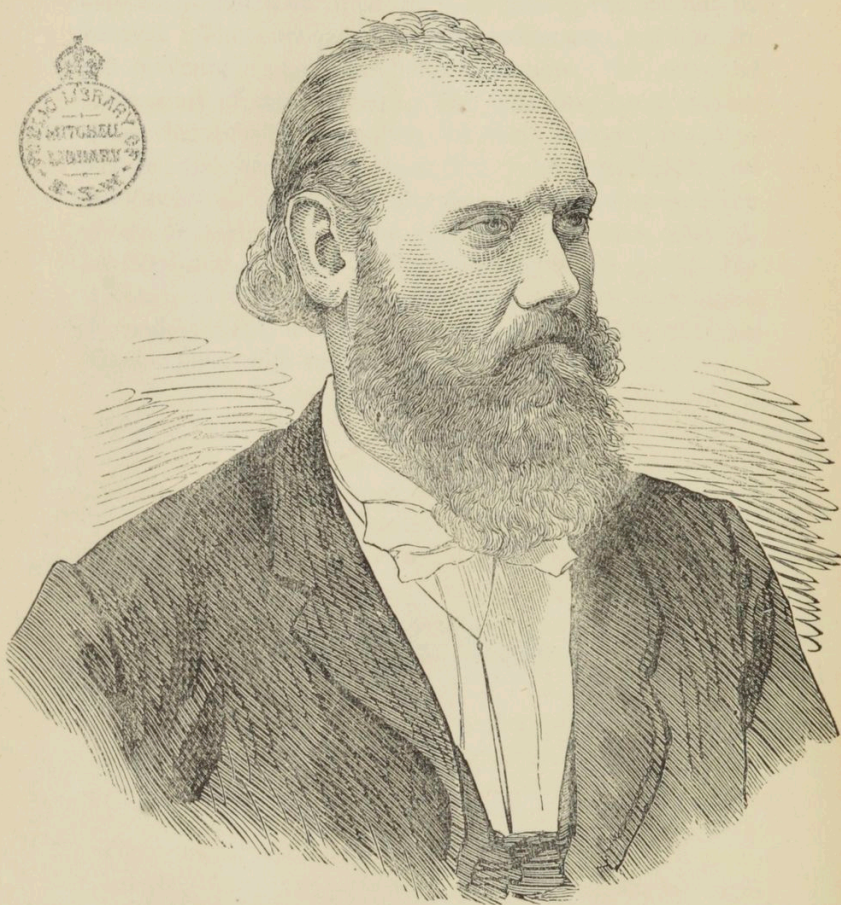
With his rush and his power, Father Kelly is a lineal descendant in the spirit, of the friars whom Rome poured forth to win back with their impassioned harangues the souls which had listened to heresy. Or he might trace a more ancient descent from the friars minores, and after all, though we have Whitfield and Wesley to boast of, history has recorded no more successful preaching than theirs. What we lack in him to make the complete preacher, the perfect orator—

“ Who would not joy if such a man could be ? ”—

is modulation, the charm of variety. Passages of calm and philosophical grandeur might be wished for. There is no reason why he should have the same eagerness, the same impetus, at the commencement as at the end of his discourse.

Cyclones have a calm in their centre ; this preacher has none anywhere. He is all motion. He is a living contradiction to that dictum of Goethe's that everything can be accurately described ; that there is nothing that cannot be painted. The couchant lion may be limned ; but how fix the quivering visage, the hurried motions, the perpetual restlessness of the panther ? The hills may be sketched, those that in silent adoration lift their peaceful peaks to heaven ; but how paint those that "clap their hands" in thunder ; how photograph the fire and the darkness, the gloom and the glare of the volcano ? And thus, after all has been said of Father Kelly, something is left unsaid. He is a man, as Coleridge says—for when we have to describe the indescribable it is to the mystic of Grasmere that we refer—"gifted with strange powers of speech."





THE REV. J. DARE.

MACAULAY has painted a clerical coxcomb, who takes his seat

“ With mincing step and languid smile,
And scatters from his kerchief sweet
Sabeian odours round the aisle,
And spreads his little jewelled hand,
And smiles round all the parish beauties,
And pats his curls and smooths his band,
Fit prelude to his saintly duties.”

Imagine the very reverse of that gentleman, and you have the Rev. Joseph Dare; a man with energy in him, who treads the rostrum as though it were his “best found and latest as well as earliest choice,” and charms and warms and enwraps a congregation by a manly presence, a frank and genial manner, and a melodious voice. He has a noble instrument in his voice undoubtedly; an instrument deep, free, and mellow in tone, pealing like the lengthened roar of the breaker in its higher swell, pleasant as the murmur of bees or the rustle of the corn in the lower; as superior to silvery notes for massive effect as the organ is to the clarion. His physical appearance corresponds. It is literally brimming over with health. He is one of those men from whom the ancients derived their ideas of the Centaur—heroic creatures, uniting the intellect of the god to the constitution of the horse. He radiates health. He must do good. We are all too much tempted to look on the dark, the sickly side of nature. A sentimental yearning for death is too often mistaken for spirituality, though it is the sin of the suicide, the

crime without the courage ; in a myriad households morbidness does duty for religion.

“ 'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
Life, and more life, is what we want.”

Mr. Dare is a perpetual corrective for these vapours. No matter what his creed, a man like him could not wear the livery of sadness. He could not assume the sepulchral tone of conventional piety. Gloomy and repulsive practices, the habit of damping the social affections, of frowning on the innocent recreations of life, of shutting up the body in a crabbed round, if not in a cloister, vanish in his presence like fogs before the sun. He carries “glad tidings of great joy” to mankind. Such a minister will always be popular. Thousands will always arise to call that preacher blessed.

It would be folly to represent Mr. Dare as one of “those faultless monsters whom the world ne’er saw.” Even in his own class he is not in the front rank. He is a “son of thunder,” or he is nothing ; but where are the piercing eye, the inevitable forefinger “trembling with the terror of the Lord ;” when does he reach the height, where does he sound the depths ? Simply he has his own particular line. He would have had it at the bar as well as in the church. His admirable self-possession, the swing of his delivery, the ease with which he runs off a series of word pictures, all assure that he would have made his mark at the criminal or even the *nisi prius* pleadings. At equity, where the lawyer must be the “most subtle of the beasts of the field,” he would have been a failure, for there is nothing subtle, nothing of the special pleader about him. In the same manner, for much the same reasons, he would have been of poor account in the Anglican communion, while he is a leader among the Wesleyans, *the* popular preacher of the

sect, whose track, as he is changed about from district to district, is marked by heart-broken congregations.

Just as Australian landscapes are vitiated by one want—that of water—so to many ears Mr. Dare's addresses would lack one quality—that which the younger Arnold expatiates on as culture. In the midst of all his luxurious growth there is nothing to suggest the deep tillage of the scholar; the possession of that learning whose obtrusion is the one thing most hateful, whose presence is, to some people, the one thing most pleasing; the ingredient which should linger in the bowl,

“And, scarce suspected, animate the whole.”

One cannot imagine this preacher discussing with his congregation the last views of the German theologians. Not that he is called upon to adopt that course. Of certain Scotch assemblies Wesley complained that “they knew everything and felt nothing;” the congregations of his sect were never open to the sneer in the evangelist's day, and they curiously continue their olden character to this. You realise at a glance round the chapels where Mr. Dare ministers—we found him alternating between St. Kilda and Prahran—that his hearers are practical men and women immersed in daily commerce, occupied with daily labour, with little inclination for metaphysics or dogma; few of them, if any, perplexed with theological questions, of scriptural authority; or biblical criticism; few deeply read in sceptical works; few more than modest in their scientific inquiries. The noble morality, the generous sentiment, the abounding love of Christianity, are the truths to which the preacher has to bear testimony. His hearers have not to be argued into accepting these gifts; they take them as the thirsty earth drinks up the rain. The minister is a reflex of the congregation. Inclination, taste, ability, and opportunity have

been alike denied him to become familiar with the works of the modern rebels against revealed religion—the Tubinger schoolmen and the disciples of Comte—to enter into their spirit, to appreciate their force—and their intellectual force and fascination may be admitted. From Renan to John Stuart Mill—

“ Their forms have not yet lost
All their original brightness, nor appear
Less than archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured.”

This preacher is a workman in the Christian citadel itself, which is not assailed, which is far from the noisy warfare of modern infidelity. He has no call to join the men who are labouring in the outworks against sharp shooting and sap. And thus he is relieved from one temptation some Melbourne clergymen do not resist. Because they are armed to meet infidelity in its higher, modern, and intellectual aspect, they are continually brandishing their weapons. They state objections of which their hearers never dreamed; they kindle warning beacons which betray the position and guide the foe; they will even hold parley, and visit the camp of the enemy. They forget that law of physics, that the surest way to produce a disease is to concentrate attention upon it. Too much learning hath not made Mr. Dare mad.

As a preacher, Mr. Dare's *forte* is to give vent to a rush of imagery, not necessarily new, for he paints from nature, and sun, moon, and stars have done their duty right well before him. He is mostly at home in an animated expression of personal feeling—lively and sincere, if not deep. In style declamatory, not analytical; in sentiment healthy, not vigorous nor graceful; in language a word-painter, not a word-picker. Such would be the report of a literary dissector. Mr. Dare is to be classed with the

orators who communicate lively feeling to their auditors—Peter the Hermit, Whitfield, and Father Mathew are types—rather than the teachers who drop thoughts deep into other men's brains—of which class Erasmus and Coleridge come readily to mind as familiar instances. He is powerful in the pulpit mainly because of the ease with which he wields one potent weapon. Half his success may be ascribed to his power of extempore speaking.

On this subject of unwritten sermons there is a word or two to be said. The "Church-goer" has touched upon it before, but it is worthy of more than an incidental reference. It is closely connected with an evil a thousand writers have bewailed, and a thousand thousand have endeavoured to solve—the secret of the decline of pulpit eloquence and of pulpit power. Written sermons are not the source of the flood of indifference to pulpit teachings—that must be traced still farther up—but they are landmarks on the way to the head waters. They knew a great deal in Judea. Men have not changed much in heart or head since the days when Damascus and Lake Tiberius acquired their fame. They still want to be preached to as Paul pleaded, as Peter spoke, and John wept—without a manuscript between their hearts and the hearers. Most of our Protestant sects imagine themselves wiser; they have turned from the example of Paul to imitate Voltaire; and instead of their ministers "withstanding to the face," they read cold essays like the Encyclopediasts. And yet in all times and places, the one thing which hardens men is artificiality. They are to be touched always by spontaneous emotion, by the quick display of impassioned conviction and ardent feeling. "When I am angry," said Luther, "I can preach well and pray well." He knew the value of strong emotion. It was not on the pinions of written sermons that he and his fellow-workers soared. Calvin, one of the leaders of that

band, had of all other men the least of an orator about him. Physically, he was little qualified ; and, intellectually, he was a university professor labouring to instruct, slowly, surely, and with care, rather than a missionary seeking to convert suddenly. He flouted rhetoric, and despised the oratory that comes upon men like a flood, and so passes away. He was deliberate, say his biographers, and slow, often pausing for a word or to ponder on a sentence ; but his vigorous thought and profound conceptions came fresh and uninterrupted from his heart ; and, as we know, his fame as an impressive speaker followed him until old age ; until, broken with disease, there was not a body left to be consigned to earth, but only a spirit to be translated to heaven. In no other practical walk of life would the habit be tolerated. Imagine the lover paying his vows, or the barrister pleading his cause, or the general addressing his forlorn hope, from sheets of foolscap pulled out of his coat-pocket. Put the practice to the death-bed test, and its hollowness would be seen. There it would be regarded as an impiety ; and yet it is not only on the death-bed that souls have to be saved.

Extempore speaking has somehow fallen into contempt among the intellectual and educated laity of certain of the sects. The circumstance is easily explicable. The art has been left to men with a natural flow of words, and a plentiful lack of ideas—for, by an inevitable law of nature, ease is associated for ever with emptiness. But such speakers are not orators. They stand in relation to the orator as the ape does to the man. Their very resemblance is a cause of loathing ; we can think but of the difference of spirit. “Get rid,” said Berreyer to Lacordaire, when he was commencing the career which astonished Europe—“Get rid of your fluency.” The gifted pleader knew—no one better—the great temptation in the way of the man possessed

of the dexterity of saying nothing with an air, of making words do duty for ideas, of beating out gold to cover a surface, or, worse than that, of electro-plating platitudes. Such men take to "thinking on their legs," as the phrase runs. They give us loosely-worded addresses, beginning apparently without knowing what they have to say, and ending apparently without remembering what they have uttered.

" And where the subject-theme may gang,
Let time and chance determine ;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon."

It is not preaching of that class the congregations wanted when they asked for extempore sermons. Better, a thousand times, the written discourse which shall inform us by its sense, than the rambling gabble which can impress only by its noise. More than all others does extempore preaching require definite thought and definite ideas. It demands increased study, not less,—study to realise the conceptions so vividly that there shall never be any difficulty in expressing them. Without such study, the manuscript, no matter how closely followed, is to be preferred ; for, if mangled sentences, and halting language, and incoherent sentiment are hateful anywhere, it must be in the pulpit. Extempore preaching is a powerful weapon, and, therefore, dangerous. It is a two-edged sword ; which, in nerveless hands, may wound to the death the wielder. Our great orators have always been the men who have fagged with the pen like galley slaves at the oar. Amongst a hundred others, Thorluck among the Germans ; Robert Hall, the English—two giants among giants—have left on record the method of their success. It was in proportion to the intensity of their toil. Both men adopted the system of arranging the order of their thoughts—of preaching from notes either mental or manu-

script. The preparation in Hall's case was extended to the most minute subdivision of the plan, the most careful selection of words, the utmost polish of illustrations. Nothing was left to accident or chance. When the hour for delivery came, the audience listened to the points the speakers had matured in solitude—that solitude which is the cradle of genius—communicated with all the vivacity of a mind seeking to clothe its sentiments in a striking dress. There might be duller passages than any which would have been forged in the closet. They were compensated by higher flights than the man himself could have attained without the quickening electric excitement of the moment. The sympathy of the audience communicated itself to the preacher. The organ played on the organist. Again, in modern days there have been few more persuasive preachers than John Angell James. Of his services, above all others, it may be said that

“Fools who went to scoff remained to pray.”

To the time of his death it was customary to dissuade from attending his chapel those who did not wish to “make an outward profession of religion,” and the writer of these papers is personally aware that on stated days for the greater part of the week John Angell James would be shut up, and devoted to no other labour than the preparation of his discourses, which were always spoken with a singular impressiveness. He was privileged to hear one charity discourse delivered on a week day, that was sold at the doors in its printed form on leaving the building. Effective extempore speaking means work; it is another word for labour; its synonym is toil. Bishop Latimer told his clergy to take example from the devil, who left no stone unturned. In this instance they may turn to the politicians, for if preachers shirk preparation, the world's speakers do not. Palmerston was pronounced by the world a careless rattler, and his point

and epigram put down to conversational ease. His latest biographer says that one person always knew when he was about to speak well, and that was his groom. He practised his passages on horseback, and the clatter of the horse failed to drown his voice, and the longer the ride, the more furious the gallop, the greater the oration. But there is no need to turn to England for an example. The most polished orator in Victoria conquers every impediment by the same effectual means. The speeches of our Chief Secretary are cutting as a Damascus blade, because they are forged like one ; because they have been hammered and beaten, and ground to an edge. The many admire his genius ; the few his industry. Without the preliminary labour, Mr. Duffy can speak as badly, as tritely, as the slipshod parish priest ; from the study come the flowers of his style, the force of his logic—those illuminated expressions that catch the country and are the delight of the Press. Politicians have to incur this toil to gain office, and preachers must do it to win souls.

Behold ! instead of a criticism on Mr. Dare, an essay on extempore speaking ! As the printers say, *stet*. Is not Mr. Dare a signal instance of the advantages of the practice—a living testimony to the fact that manner has its value as well as matter ? “ Oh,” exclaimed the Chaldean sage, “ that one might plead for a man with God as a man does with his neighbour ?” Mr. Dare does.



THE REV. A. F. ORNSTIEN.

THIS day is not, "cool, and calm, and bright" with the calmness and brightness of the hallowed day of the Christians. It is its forefather, the Jewish sabbath, the busiest day of the week for the Christians, but still observed as a day of praise and prayer by the descendants of those who heard the thunder and saw the tablets of Sinai. The world runs on while the Jews worship. Dealers in scrip have settled down to their avocation ; traders in purple and fine linen are welcoming the chariots which bring them customers from the east and from the west—say Kew and Brighton ; markets are crowded, the shrill whistle of the steamers on the river and the locomotive on land is in the ear, the restless hum of a large city in full life and vigour fills the air as its attendants turn into the synagogue. They leave a morning of noise and bustle, and they return to a noon of action and strife. And this step from active life to worship and back—the plunge of the diver for his pearl—comes with a shock.

Singular as are the ceremonies of the synagogue to a Gentile and a stranger within its walls, nothing is more strange than the first feeling of incongruity between the within and the without. Religion and life meet face to face without warning, without preparation, and they start like creatures between whom there is a secret of guilt and wrong, of sorrow and remorse ; like a husband and wife whom God hath joined, and vice hath put asunder. The abyss that separates Worship from Traffic is perceived, the whole truth is realised—how the creak of the opening shutters of the shop is as the cock-crow to religion, telling it to retire to silence and gloom, to depart from life, to leave man alone



with Mammon. It would be impossible for us to repeat a prayer or make obeisance at the Meuzzin's call or the tinkle of the Ave Maria. We cannot imagine the Verandah on its knees, nor Bourke-street Bars at their devotion. We have not added to vice the last sin of hypocrisy.

Different as a synagogue is from a church or chapel, it is like. You do not know whether to dwell upon the diversities or the resemblances, but it would be easy for the most obtuse of observers to perceive whence the liturgies and services of the Catholic and Anglican churches were derived. The Bourke Street Synagogue is an ordinary meeting-hall in shape, with much of the masonic-hall in decoration. At the further—the Jerusalem—end is the ark, a curtained alcove, like in position, to the communion recess, or the altar, wherein is lodged the written roll of the law. The alcove is rich in colours, and is sometimes unveiled to the congregation; sometimes closed. Synagogues, whispers your cicerone, are modelled with the Temple of Solomon in mind, and the ark corresponds with the inner sanctuary, with the Holy of Holies.

In the middle of the hall, and its greatest peculiarity, is the Almennor, a raised platform, with massive sides; a structure in itself; standing where the burnt offerings of the Temple were bestowed, and used now for the sacrifice of thanksgiving and prayer. Here the chief minister brings the roll from the ark, from here he intones the service, and from here the choir, consisting of boys, give forth the psalms, returning to their seats when they have concluded. Around it on side seats are placed the males, the women occupying the galleries above. The apparel of the women is the fashion of the day. Not exactly so that of the men, for over the garments of the period each one wears a scarf long and broad, and with coloured ends and fringes—the ordered “Talith” of the Book of Numbers. “Speak unto

the children of Israel, and bid them that they make their fringes on the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of their borders a riband of blue. And it shall be unto you for a fringe that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them." The scarf is religiously worn, with all its fringes, and singular it is how it will alter the appearance. You recognise the eye, the smile, the features, the very Piccadilly whiskers of your friend, and yet you look twice to identify him. There is incongruity in this mixture of the costume of Collins Street and the desert, but there is poetry also. The former, not the latter, is added to by the wearing in the synagogue of the hat—without exception the cylindrical beaver, the chimney-pot of commerce. Each boy present wears his beaver, and mightily pleased and jaunty are the young gentlemen at the greatness thrust upon them. At the present day the interior of the Synagogue is disappointing. Decorated as the walls and pillars of the building are with gilt and gold, and displaying also the deeper hues of the rainbow, the interior might and should be rich and impressive. To make it so the congregation must renovate. They must do more than that also, for they must build up one half their windows. The edifice has not walls so much as a succession of openings for glass, and the "garish light of day" puts to perpetual shame any work man can do in colours.

The Jewish service is long, lasting many hours, and is all liturgical. There are appointed prayers, appointed readings from the Scriptural and Rabbinical writings, appointed psalms of penitence and praise, and all are read or sung in Hebrew. The congregation takes little part in the service; less than Anglicans; as much, perhaps, as the Roman Catholics. The physical labour involved in it nearly all falls

upon the chief minister ; he intones everything, and must have really an arduous task to perform. The choir consists of lads whose unaccompanied singing is, to strange ears, more peculiar than pleasant, consisting mainly of high nasal and monotonous notes. According to opponents of Wagner, the music of the future is devoid of harmony and has little tune, and the music of the past, if one may be permitted to judge from the strains of the synagogue, anticipated the German professor. The prayers and psalms—the service itself—are, of course, noble and grand, for they are taken from the Old Testament ; and there grandeur and poetry have their home. To copy from that is to be sublime ; but though the words are living, the language is dead ; the service is for the Jew, not for the stranger, for though you may scare a bird by shouting in Latin, you cannot impress the ignorant by reading in Hebrew or Greek. Some picturesque points, however, must strike the Gentile visitor ; such are the carrying of the roll of the written law from the ark to the table ; the calling up of certain of the elders to the Almemnor to hear the words correctly read ; the elevation of the scroll before the people while the minister declares aloud, to quote from the translated prayer-book, “with the eye fixed on the exposed writings,” “Lo ! this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel by the command of the Lord through the hand of Moses. It is a tree of life to those that hold on it, and all its supporters are happy ; its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace.” An allusion here, a ceremony there, continually remind the Christian indeed where he is ; that he stands at the source of his own faith, where his own Lord was instructed ; where, in His manhood the Saviour performed some of the most wondrous of His miracles ; where He spake many of His most gracious words. If the Jewish liturgy cannot elevate the thought of the

Christian, through his ignorance of language, the service and the situation can turn them inwards to meditate and to ponder.

The service of the synagogue is complete without a discourse ; but a pulpit in the one corner of the building tells its own tale. However much they may grumble at what they receive, a sermon is the one thing congregations of all sects and religions find they cannot do without. They all want fresh thought—the thought of the age ; the old metal perhaps, the coinage of our fathers, but newly stamped, from the mint of the day. The minister of the synagogue must be a preacher. It is not enough that we have heard Mr. Ornstien's fine, rich, manly voice for an hour and a half intoning the service in Hebrew ; it must next be raised for well-nigh half an hour in English. Mr. Ornstien is perfectly at home in the one place as the other. In dress, but for his tall hat, he might be mistaken for a Christian divine, for he wears the decent black gown and white tie sanctioned by orthodoxy ; in matter his sermons might pass current in any chapel, but for the reference being made to the Rabbis and not to the apostles. Instead of texts from Peter and Paul, we have quotations from Ben Natai and Gamilel, and the appeals are to Ben Simeon and Tarphon, instead of to John and to James.

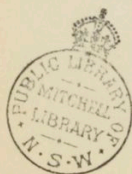
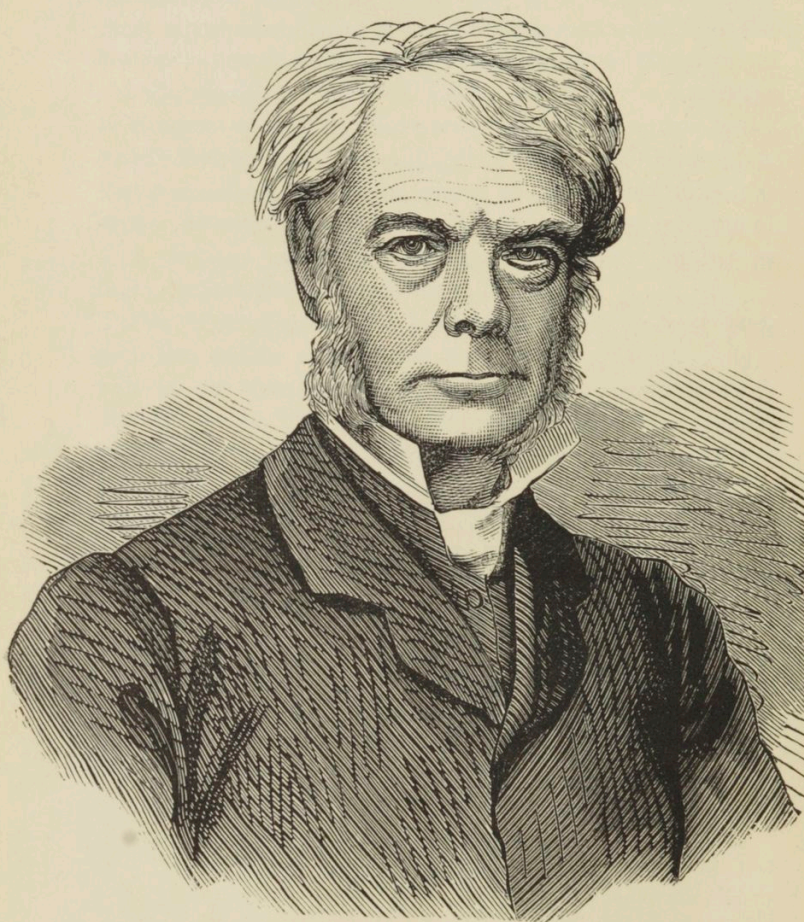
Mr. Ornstien's delivery is equally in accord with that of many of his brethren of the churches—simple, impressive, and deliberative, marked, as it was said of the judicious Hooker, by “a grave zeal and an earnest voice, his eyes never wandering to distract one's imagination, inasmuch as he seemed to weigh the words as he spake.” Should Mr. Ornstien by any means be included in the proposed scheme for a systematic interchange of pulpits, he will have nothing to alter, nothing to learn or to unlearn before entering any Anglican or Presbyterian church ; his new hearers will find

that if the one Testament and the Christian fathers have been closed to him, he can the more vividly illustrate the other from other sources ; they will be astonished also at the identity of tone between the two his sermons establish. It would be instructive to hear the rev. gentleman discourse on the Jewish Sabbath, and show, as he could and would—no man better, for there is a genial freshness in his face that gives assurance of the sound disposition as well as the strong mind—the libel involved in the shibboleth that the “Christian Sunday is not the Jewish Sabbath.” He would show that it is ; that the slandered Sabbath itself was not a day of gloom, but was instinct with joy and cheerfulness ; that the contrast between the two days is a mere controversial flourish, that the “Jewish Sabbath” is really the day for which Christians should strive, that, to the religious mind, its yoke is easy, and its burden light.

The “Church-goer” did hear Mr. Ornstien deliver a sound discourse to prove the unity of men. He took the dicta of three Rabbis on the spirit, the dominant principle of the Old Testament. Referring to the verse, “This is the book of the generations of man,” Ben Uzzi had said, “This is the great principle of the law.” Ben Soma had said, “There is a verse which teaches a higher principle, and that is, ‘Hear, O Israel!’” Ben Menas had declared there is a verse which teaches a yet higher principle, and that is, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” And these judgments, the preacher urged, were one and the same. The Rabbis equally and alike set forth that the mission of Judaism and its glory was to unite mankind in love. Personal human feeling, tones of tenderness and pity, there were not in his address ; not as we find them in the appeals of the preachers of a bleeding and suffering Saviour ; but the high sentiment, the exalted conceptions which Monotheism engenders in its sincere believers, in all ages and all coun-

tries, in its Davids in Israel, and its Channings in America, these were there—eternal, awful, if to us sterile peaks, the landmarks of God in the ages. But what struck his hearer most was the familiarity of the minister's quotations from the Rabbis; their identity with the precepts of the Scripture of the Christians. He believed, for the first time, the statement of Grotius—quoted by Emerson—that every sentence of the Lord's Prayer is to be found in the writings of the Rabbis, that our daily prayer is the grains of gold sifted from the sands; he understood more vividly how its utterer came to clear away as well as to found, and to restore as well as to build, to fulfil the law, and not to destroy it.

The "Church-goer" has been able to do little more than note the surface impressions made upon a Christian by a visit to the Synagogue. Mr. Ornstien is consequently a sufferer, for he has had a meagre tribute paid to himself personally. To do him justice, he should be described by one of his own creed, who can enter into his position, sympathise with his sympathies, appreciate the boldness, perceive the novelties of his teaching, who can condemn or admire, praise or blame. That task is beyond the present writer. He can only present a cold record, whose spirit is duty, and not the zeal and sympathy without which complete criticism is impossible. Mr. Ornstien must take the will for the deed, remembering that Christians, not Jews, are the constituents and critics of the CHURCH-GOER.



THE REV. J. E. BROMBY, D.D.

ALTHOUGH he is without a parish, Dr. Bromby comes fairly under the head of Melbourne preachers. It continually happens that Anglican congregations witness the white head, the genial ruddy face, and the twinkling eyes of the headmaster of the Church of England Grammar School rising above the pulpit board to deliver the discourse of the day. It may be that the attendants have come to church impelled by a stern sense of duty, and prepared for the worst—nerved to listen to the frigid eloquence, the schoolboy tone, the inanimate diction, which linger still in the pulpit in this intellectual age, as darkness dallies in some valleys after sunrise, as stagnant pools will mark a deluge long after dry land has appeared around. They bless the chance that has sent them succour. Nor is it necessary that Dr. Bromby should be set-off by a background of mediocrity. Whosoever's place he takes he is welcome on his own merits, and welcome not by a class or a section, but both by grave and gay, by young and old. You can see the smile creeping gradually over the stern, business-wrinkled face of the father at the one end of the pew, and dimpling the cheek of the well-preserved dame at the other. "The dear Doctor!" will be the exclamation of the blushing young lady in the middle. "Dr. Bromby, by Jove!" you can see is what her moustached male escort has whispered into her conscious ear. There is a congratulatory tone in the inevitable cough with which congregations are afflicted; from one end of the building to the other there is a satisfied rustle of religious silks. The people hear Dr. Bromby gladly for two reasons, which explain the whole character of his ministrations. Firstly, he is one of those preachers who refrain from making sad the hearts

God has not made sad ; secondly, he is a teacher whom men can sit under without wearing the badge of intellectual servitude or committing intellectual suicide.

One preliminary word with the weaker brethren. Dr. Bromby is not considered orthodox on some points. Probably he would not obtain a license to occupy a living in the Low Church diocese of Melbourne, for he wears conspicuously the suspected uniform of the Broad Church party. The band led by Bishop Temple, by Dean Stanley, and by Maurice, in England, regard him as Captain of the Host here. He must be an object of dread to the authorities, but, for all that, like his fellow-labourers, he does a great work for his church. He often secures for her, in dark and troublous days, the moral sympathy of the young, and restless, and aspiring spirits, who insist upon "proving all things," who to their fathers' doctrine and the clergy's dogma add their own freshness of conjecture and felicity of explanation. But—what the "Church-goer" wished to say earlier—his listeners may be certain of one thing, and that is that no distasteful opinions will be intruded upon them.

Dr. Bromby's sermons never deal with doctrinal theology at all ; they are applications of the essential spirit of the Gospel to moral culture. Modern congregations have, indeed, little craving for the former sort of food, and one thing is certain, that if Dr. Bromby is to feed them, it must be with other loaves and other fishes. Moreover, delicacy, if not inclination, would keep him silent on controversial points, for he is the occupant of other men's pulpits ; and we may be right well sure that he would hardly be so often invited there if he abused his position. The cuckoo has every bird's bill against it—is hooted out of the grove, not because of its peculiar voice, but because of its propensity to lay eggs in strange nests. Dr. Bromby, on the contrary, is made welcome in every parish. The incumbent who solicits

him knows that the strain of warfare is banished from the edifice when this guest ministers. Dr. Bromby has delivered lectures and addresses which have sent a sword through the land, but he never preaches a sermon to which "the whole estate of Christ's Church militant could not say, 'Amen.'" He may unloose the ominous raven of controversy from the platform; in the pulpit his nestling companion is the dove of peace.

The preacher's charm of manner is great, yet, in some respects, it is an acquired taste, and particularly with regard to his voice. It is a peculiarity, a contradiction, a decided accent, but a soft cadence; a regulated rush upon some words, a long dwelling upon others; a rhythm of rise and swell in the inflection, like a running stream with successive cascades. His utterance is delightfully distinct, his manner uniformly calm, more fitted to please an affectionate circle than to thrill a promiscuous auditory as with a trump. In literary style he is singularly flowing, his sentences possessing that verbal melody, that harmony of arrangement, which is the most subtle and yet the first recognised charm of composition, and which, strange to say, is usually found associated with men who have little ear for instrumental music. They fall on the ear "softer than the west wind's sigh," musical in their cadence as

"The unmeasured notes
Of that strange lyre whose strings
The genii of the breezes sweep."

Divorce the mind from the matter, and the sentences would have a positive lullaby influence. But that twain cannot be put asunder.

It is one secret of his popularity that you can always depend upon a good sermon from Dr. Bromby. He is the most equable of preachers, the one man to whom a country cousin may be taken without your running the provoking

risk of apologising afterwards that you never heard your minister so tame or jejune. The explanation is simple. The doctor has the immeasurable advantage of not being a parish drudge, a hack writer, forced to produce his tale of sermons in health or sickness, business or leisure, in storm or sunshine, when the mind is weary as when the mind is fresh. His Pegasus does not have to run the race with panting sides and trembling knees, and get distanced as a consequence by a "pampered jade of Asia," of not one-half its rival's pace or its competitor's breeding. He has time to put work into his compositions, like any other literary artist of merit must have. In his sermons we see industrious leisure and its results. Not only that, but Dr. Bromby has the same opportunity Whitfield turned to such good account, of preaching the same discourse before different audiences; Franklin, it will be remembered, declaring of that fiery apostle, the Paul of Wesleyanism, that it was easy to tell which sermon had been just composed, and which had become perfect by practice. One of Whitfield's most famous passages, the impetuous, terrible appeal to the angel he supposed to be returning in sorrow from the obdurate crowd, to tarry a little while longer; not to enter the gates of heaven without the news of one sinner brought to salvation, Franklin heard several times. It electrified the last audience, says that cold, cautious critic, more than the first. The audience at Philadelphia were more spell-bound when it was delivered than the original hearers in the Cornwall pits. And so with Dr. Bromby. The sermon which has delighted St. Mary's in the morning may gratify St. Peter's in the evening, and will be heard with greater pleasure still by St. Mark's when its time comes. Thrice has the peripatetic "Church-goer" had the satisfaction of listening to one discourse, and were he privileged to have a "command" service in church, as Governors are to order

special plays at the theatre, he would hear it a fourth time. It is a fair specimen of Dr. Bromby's style and genius. It describes the mercies for which a Christian has cause to be thankful from his birth to his grave. The sentiments are those of Addison's beautiful hymn—

“ When all thy mercies, oh my God,
My rising soul surveys.”

“ The earliest composition,” says Robert Burns, “ that I recollect taking pleasure in, and the stanzas of which are music to my ear.” Why is it omitted in modern hymn-books? though that question is explained by the counter query—why is so much sacrilegious bathos admitted; why are many of the spasmodic specimens in “ Hymns Ancient and Modern ” thrust upon congregations who have some literary taste, as well as Christian feeling; who do not find halting rhymes, and mixed metaphors, ordered anywhere in the sacrifices of the Temple, and who also doubt whether of such are “ the anthems without end, and the doxologies without ceasing ” that we are informed resound with celestial sweetness across the plains of heaven. To return, however, to the subject. Addison's sentiments are expressed in Dr. Bromby's sermon with equal force, with an equal grace of diction. Such a strain palls not, by repetition, the hearer

“ Ever in its melodious store,
Finding some spell unknown before.”

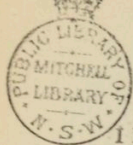
It dwells in the memory like the remembrance of a loved and peaceful landscape, like the recollection of long years of departed happiness. If Dr. Bromby will deliver it again, he shall have one appreciative hearer; if he will publish, one subscriber can be guaranteed. It shall have a place on one bookshelf to soothe days of sickness or hours of gloom.

Dr. Bromby is certainly the most ornate of Melbourne preachers. One hears occasionally of the “ naked truth ”

being set before the people. There is no such thing in reality, because all truth comes to us through a medium, but no doubt there are different kinds of mediums. The light may shine through a clear glass, or struggle through an opaque material. With Dr. Bromby it falls softly as through a richly stained cathedral window. There are the rich, deep hues of the one, and the soft and decorated verbiage of the other. Everything in the cathedral is touched with a grace not its own; metaphor, image, and illustration light up this preacher's composition. In this way he is a pupil in the school of Jeremy Taylor. It is curious also, and yet not curious, for a similarity of disposition explains the circumstance, that the very point on which Taylor was heterodox is that on which Dr. Bromby is hardly regarded by his brethren as sound. Both wear the livery of the New Testament, the livery of love; both are more than dubious of the popular impressions regarding life. "beyond the grave;" both shrink instinctively from giving shape and form to the mysteries which Infinite Wisdom has veiled in the Scripture, from adopting the remorseless, relentless, and even ferocious theories of the cruel Middle Ages, when men delighted in depicting the physical torture of friends and foe, brethren and aliens, and degraded their Maker by attributing to Him the terrible creations of their own diseased brains and morbid imaginations. Taylor, confronted by more definite teaching, was perhaps more distinct in his opposition to any doctrine that vitiates the Saviour's triumph over sin. Dr. Bromby's position would seem to the outside world more analogous to that of Robertson, who spent a portion of his time endeavouring "not to believe in eternal punishment:" and surely the fact of these two men being accused of heresy in their lifetime and counted after their death as dear to all Christians, as the true and unselfish, the faithful in adversity, whose lives are the heritage of the church, should teach us all, clergy and

laity alike, the wisdom of exercising, above all other gifts, the most excellent gift of charity. Christianity, after all, consists in realising "Christ and Him crucified" in our daily life, and not, as it has well been said, in holding "correct views of the devil."

There will be another Shakespeare before there is another Taylor for grandeur, for majesty, and for invention, but Dr. Bromby has the lesser characteristics of his master to a singular extent—the honeyed sweetness, the mingled fact and fancy, the twain ever playing together in the discourse, chasing and chased, swelling and falling, blending and separating like the harmonies in a fugue. And so completely does history repeat itself, that the same charge South brought against Taylor is commonly repeated by local critics against our present preacher. South declared of the Bishop of Down that the apostles, "poor mortals," were content to take considerably lower steps than he, and state with marked plainness and singular brevity that he who believed should be saved, and that it would fare very badly with those who believed not; that their preaching pricked the conscience, while Taylor's charmed the head, or gratified the heart. The same complaints obtain expression here. "He is too discursive for a minister, he is too interesting; he does not preach, he lectures," are the frequent remarks passed on Dr. Bromby by people who lack poetic fire; by men who think that simplicity means barrenness. No idea is more fallacious. Everything is simple that is "understood of the people," and it by no means follows that because Dr. Bromby is the most ornate, he is the least clear of our preachers. On the very contrary, he possesses in an eminent degree the art of making difficult things plain, of illumining dark places, of doing for theology what Macaulay did for history—making it as fascinating as a romance. The best test is this—that Dr. Bromby is listened to with eagerness

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and pleasure. He is run after where others are slept under, or abandoned.

A great deal might be said as to what Dr. Bromby is not. We might wish for a greater variety of style, for more volume, for more vehemence, for more telling power; that the sea should not always be smooth, and the skies smiling; that sometimes we might see the gathering clouds, or hear the boom of the breakers, "in half glutted hollows of reef rocks." He is all sweetness, and the "time for figs is not yet." But to dwell on these points, what is it but to blame the graceful runner because he is not the sturdy athlete; to say that the rose is not the oak. There are diversities of gifts in the church, and "diversities of operations." Dr. Bromby's gift is clear. He is a "sweet singer" in Israel. His mind is fixed on the contemplation of Heaven. He cannot turn to picture Hell. He binds the bruised reed; it is for others to strike the sterile tree. His labour of love is by winning words to charm willing hearts, and make persuasion do the work of fear.

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