

THE  
PRINCETON REVIEW.

OCTOBER, 1856.

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No. IV.

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ART. I.—*The Bible, the Missal, and the Breviary; or Ritualism Self-illustrated in the Liturgical Books of Rome: Containing the Text of the entire Roman Missal, Rubrics, and Prefaces, translated from the Latin; with Preliminary Dissertations, and Notes from the Breviary, Pontifical, etc.* By the Rev. George Lewis, of Ormiston. Edinburgh, 1853: pp. 809.

MR. LEWIS claims this as the first full English translation of the great Roman Liturgy.\* The Missal is not to be found in any other spoken language. One Voisin, in the seventeenth century, who presumed to make a French version, was anathematized for his pains, and the book is not extant. Before the present undertaking, Hussenbeth's was the most complete English translation, and he gives all that is necessary for the information of the unlearned in following the service. The small volumes which are in the hands of the worshippers in these churches, are not missals or mass-books, but guides to the observance of what the priest is performing at the altar,

\* The copy followed is "The Roman Missal restored, according to the decree of the most holy Council of Trent; published by order of the holy Pius V., and revised by authority of Pope Clement VIII. and Urban VIII. Augmented with the new Masses granted by the indulgence of the Apostolic See. Mechlin, 1840."

ART. IV.—*History and Repository of Pulpit Eloquence, (Deceased Divines,)* containing the Master-pieces of Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Massillon, Fléchier, Abbadie, Taylor, Barrow, Hall, Watson, McLaurin, Chalmers, Evans, Edwards, Davies, John M. Mason, etc. etc., with discourses from Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Augustine, Athanasius, and others among the “Fathers;” and from Wickliffe, Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Knox, Latimer, etc., of the “Reformers.” Also sixty other celebrated Sermons, from as many eminent divines in the Greek, Latin, English, German, Irish, French, Scottish, American, and Welch Churches, a large number of which have now, for the first time, been translated. The whole arranged in their proper order, and accompanied with Historical Sketches of Preaching in the different countries represented, and Biographical and Critical Notices of the several Preachers, and their discourses. By Henry C. Fish, Author of Premium Essay, “Primitive Piety Revived.” In two volumes. New York: Published by M. W. Dodd. 1856.

THIS long title-page gives a better conception of the general contents of the work, than any brief summary of them which we can frame. The author's design thus clearly and fully announced, must commend itself not only to all intelligent preachers, but to all who appreciate able exhibitions of moral and religious truth, along with the grandest flights of human eloquence. On the whole, we think the execution answerable to the design. We, of course, should not, in every instance, have made the same selection as our author, either of preacher or sermon. This, however, is only saying, that in going over a field so vast, no two men would see everything alike. Of the world-renowned masters of pulpit eloquence, nevertheless, he has not failed to select discourses of acknowledged preëminence, and permanent celebrity. In translating from other languages, he has enjoyed the aid of competent scholars. The critical and biographical observations add to the value of the book. While the best sermons of all ages and countries have an intrinsic literary value for all persons of liberal culture, and a still higher interest for the Christian, they have the highest interest and value for preachers. Familiarity with the best models in any art must increase skill and proficiency in the practice of

that art. Servile imitation, and whatever borders on plagiarism, of course, tends to moral and intellectual degeneracy. It only aggravates the impotence from which it proceeds. Such abuse is no argument against the proper use of the great master-pieces of sacred eloquence, any more than cases of literary aping or theft furnish a good reason why an original writer should keep himself ignorant of literature. As we think that the study of the great discourses in this compilation would be of great service to most preachers, so we know not where else most can have access to them, or their equivalent. The work, therefore, supplies an important desideratum.

We are glad that the author has not confined his selections to those preachers who have attained the highest distinction as rhetoricians and orators, in the more limited or technical sense of these terms. His range extends to those who have been distinguished for the strong and effective presentation of divine truth, and for working strong convictions and impressions in the minds of their hearers, whether according to the rules of rhetorical art or not. Many of the mightiest preachers have been neither elegant nor eloquent, according to a very common acceptance of these terms. That is, they have been distinguished for force of matter, but not for any graces of style or delivery. These graces are by no means to be disparaged. They do not weaken; they intensify what force otherwise exists. But, of themselves, they do not constitute it, any more than a beautiful dress makes a strong man. Ornament is feeble and disgusting, where there is nothing to adorn. We think the preacher may receive quite as much valuable instruction in studying the secret of the power of the great sermon of Edwards, found in this collection, entitled "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," and why, when calmly read from a fine manuscript, held up in the author's hand, it startled a congregation, before thoughtless, into tears, and sobbings, and audible shrieks, as in studying the magnificent funeral orations of Bossuet.

Within a recent period, there has been much earnest discussion relative to the manner of preaching, in distinction from the matter of it. To a certain extent, the matter and manner of preaching interpenetrate and determine each other. All mat-

ter sensuous and intellectual must exist in some form, and, while it remains unchanged, is inseparable from that form; which is only saying, that any substance remaining what it is, is inseparable from the qualities which make it what it is. So far, to determine the matter is to determine the form. To determine that the matter of the human body is an animal organism, is so far forth to determine its form. To determine that the matter of a book shall be moral philosophy, geometry, or chemistry, is so far to determine its form. To settle the point that preaching shall be scriptural, philosophical, doctrinal, practical, Pelagian, Calvinistic, topical, or expository in its matter, is, so far, to determine its form. The discussions in regard to the manner of preaching to which we allude, have had respect to it, not in points wherein it is implicated in the matter, but to points which are independent of it. They admit of indefinite variation in proclaiming essentially the same matter, the same truths, thoughts, reasonings, in the same order of arrangement. They relate to elocution, gesticulation, the use of manuscripts in the pulpit, and whatever in style or delivery affects the vivacity and impressiveness of a sermon, which in substance and matter is essentially what it should be. Manner, in this sense, and as separable from the matter of preaching, (while we by no means underrate its importance,) it is no part of our present purpose to investigate. We inquire rather *what* it is the minister's duty to preach, and *how* he shall do it, only so far as matter and form mutually interpenetrate and determine each other. This is the highest question for the preacher to decide. It is of great consequence how we preach. It is of still greater, what we preach, except so far as the former involves the latter.

But is it, after all, a question, or at any rate, an open question, among Christians, or if among Christians, among orthodox and evangelical Christians, who acknowledge that the preacher's commission is to preach the gospel, and that he fulfils his duty only so far as he preaches the word, the whole word, and nothing but the word? Can it be an open question among those who accept the Reformed confessions as faithful summaries of the teachings of revelation? In one sense, this is not an open question among any who can of right be called Chris-

tians. Still less room for debate remains among those who agree in that interpretation of Scripture which makes salvation wholly of grace. But even among these, there is a vast diversity, not merely in the style of their preaching, but in the matter or substance of it. This does not imply that they necessarily contradict one another. It does not necessarily imply that any impugn, or even that they do not confess and abide by every article of the Confession in their discourses. But it implies something more than that diversity of gifts, by which different men are endowed with special qualifications for commending the same gospel to different classes of minds. The difference lies in the different proportions, surroundings, applications in which they set forth the different elements of the same body of truth; in what they signalize by frequent and emphatic iteration, and what they omit or touch lightly and charily, and in the foreign matter with which they illustrate, obscure, or encumber it. How else shall we account for the fact that one preacher has power chiefly in the aptness and force of his appeals to the impenitent; another, in awakening devout feeling in the hearts of Christians; a third, in his lucid statement and unanswerable vindication of Christian doctrines; a fourth, in the enforcement of the moralities of the gospel; a fifth, in his extraordinary tact at working up occasional, miscellaneous, and semi-secular sermons? Even among those then, who acknowledge fealty to the great principle of preaching the word, it is still an open question, in what proportions, surroundings, applications, and other circumstances, this word and the various parts thereof shall be preached. And this question will bear long pondering by all who have assumed the awful, yet glorious office of watching for souls, and are bound to distribute to each a portion in due season. For who is sufficient for these things?

At the outset, we may safely postulate, 1. That the Scriptures themselves exhibit the various elements of divine truth, in the relative proportions in which it is the preacher's duty to teach and enforce them.

2. That they are also an infallible guide as to the mutual relations and practical applications of these truths; and that, while the manner of exhibiting and illustrating them requires

adaptation to the present circumstances and habits of thought among the people, they may not be intrinsically modified by alteration, suppression, or addition.

3. That the preacher fulfils his mission just and only as his preaching causes these truths to be known and, through grace, operative among his hearers.

4. That all other acquirements, attractions, graces, or means of power and influence in a preacher, are legitimate and valuable in proportion as they subserve this end; and any sources of power in the pulpit, aside of this, no way contribute to the discharge of his mission. Their tendency is to supersede, and thus, in various degrees, to hinder or defeat it.

Finally: The great end of preaching is to glorify God, and bless man, by bringing sinners to the "obedience of faith" in Christ, and promoting their sanctification, their knowledge, love, and adoration of God; their assimilation, conformity, and devotion to him, in thought, desire, word, and deed; their cordial and delighted communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; their love, gentleness, meekness, patience, uprightness, and faithfulness towards their fellow-men. In a word, the great end of preaching, with respect to men, is to advance them "in all holy conversation and godliness."

Starting with these premises, which must be their own evidence to all who concede that our sole commission from Christ is to preach the word, it results:

1. That God should be the great, overshadowing object set forth in the preacher's message. All preaching that violates this precept must be vicious. This appears from every side and aspect in which the subject can be viewed. To say, as we shall say, that Christ should be the burden of the preacher's message, does not contradict, it re-affirms this principle. For Christ is God. In preaching Christ, we simply preach God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses. Whether we set forth the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost, either one of the Three, or the Three in One, we directly and immediately hold forth God, and none else. Now, if we look at the Bible or its inspired preachers as models, we find God always and everywhere in the foreground. Indeed, the highest evidence of its divinity is the radiance of God upon it. He is

the first and the last, shining in it, through it, and from it. Its words are not those which man's wisdom teacheth, and it speaks as never man spake. Another consideration is, that the word to be preached is the word of God. It emanates from him exclusively. It is to be enjoined in his name, and by his authority. It cannot be truly received, or produce its due saving effect, unless it be received, "not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which worketh effectually in them that believe." 1 Thess. ii. 13. So the preacher is the ambassador of God. Can he then truly deliver his message, unless He in whose behalf he pleads be the prominent object in his inculcations?

Still further: The truths which the Bible unfolds are truths relating to God, in his nature and attributes, his works and ways; or they concern us in our relations to him, as our Creator, Preserver, Sovereign, Redeemer, and Judge; or they respect the relations and obligations of men to each other, which in turn depend upon their common relation to the one God and Lord of all. Herein are contained all the doctrines, and hence arise all the duties of our religion. How then can they be adequately set forth in any form of sermonizing which does not make God all in all?

If we consider the duties or attainments required in the Bible, they all have God for their object and end. The love, the desires, the worship, the penitence, the sorrow, the self-renunciation, the devotion required, are no otherwise genuine than as they have supreme respect to God. Our duties to men have their strongest bond in his requirements, and are only acceptable when done as unto the Lord: "Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." What better then than a mere counterfeit of Christian teaching can we have, when God is not made its Alpha and Omega?

Besides, all disposition, ability, efficiency for attaining the favour or doing the will of God, are the gifts of his sovereign grace. Whatever we are, or have, or do, that is acceptable to God, or in the least meets his requirements, by the grace of God we are what we are. All is of God. All must come from God. To God belongs all the glory. To God we must look

for every good gift and every perfect gift. When he withdraws, our comforts droop, and all our graces die. Is it conceivable, then, that the religion of God can be inculcated, except as he himself is magnified? And is not this view thrice confirmed, when we consider that the declared end of the whole method of our salvation is that God may be glorified, the issue of the whole is to be, that God shall be visibly, as he is really, all in all?

Many, doubtless, will be ready to say that we have been vindicating a truism. We shall not dispute them. If it be so, it only proves our position the more impregnable. It is one of those truisms that very many need to single out of their neglected and forgotten common-places, and to brighten it into its due lustre, and swell to its due proportions, by surveying it afresh, in its deep grounds and infinite reach of application. Coleridge says, in the first, if not best aphorism of his *Aids to Reflection*, that we can seldom be more usefully employed, than in "rescuing admitted truths from the neglect caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission. Extremes meet. Truths, of all others the most awful and interesting, are too often considered as *so* true, that they lose all the power of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors." That there is a difference as to the extent to which God is magnified, and the whole texture of discourse saturated with the divine element, by different preachers, is undeniable. With some, a sense of his excellency and our own littleness and vileness; of the blessedness of his favour and the terrors of his wrath; of the importance of being prepared to meet him; of living for his service and glory: of dependence upon him for grace, salvation, and blessedness: of the impossibility of finding true felicity, except in the enjoyment of him for ever, is the grand impression sought and effected. With others, the human, the worldly, the philosophic, social, and political, usurp the predominance. These are the great objective elements that loom up and secure an obtrusive, if not overshadowing prominence, in the preacher's unfoldings and inculcations. Man and the world appear so great, that God and heaven are scarcely greater. And in some cases the preacher himself is foremost



in the group, and could hardly say with the Apostle, "we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."\*

If, then, the foremost object to be set forth in preaching, is the Most High, in his being, infinitude, and perfection; in his works of creation, providence, and grace; in his relations towards us as our Maker, Preserver, Benefactor, our Sovereign, Saviour and Judge; then that preaching is neither biblical, christian, nor even religious, which is not so impregnated with this divine element, that God is not only its central, but pervading object; over all, in all, through all, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things, to whom be glory for ever.

2. We are thus prepared to understand the attitude in which man should be put by the preacher. As the Bible is addressed to man, and aims to bring him to the salvation it proffers, *i. e.* to spiritual life, holiness and bliss, this is a point of capital importance. But it is needless here to investigate anthropology. The great object of the preacher should be to make him know and feel that he is a dependent, rational, and accountable creature, owing fealty to his Maker—that he was made to love, serve, commune with, and enjoy him; that herein is life and bliss, and that alienation from God by sin is death and woe. These truths, the more earnestly they are pressed, find a responsive attestation in every conscience not seared as with a hot iron. And they are all the more felt, in proportion as God is apprehended in his goodness and holiness, his sovereignty and omniscience. But while this is fundamental and conditional to any religion whatever, it underlies another truth which is cardinal in Christianity. We of course refer to man's fallen state, including sin, guilt, misery, helplessness. In general, it may be affirmed, that men will realize all this, just

\* We have been credibly informed that two distinguished living preachers, when formerly stationed in the same Western city, had, for an occasional auditor, an irreligious officer of the army. This gentleman said to our informant, that he listened to the one with the greater pleasure; to the other with less satisfaction, but with greater respect and reverence, if not profit. Being asked to explain himself, he said, "The former exalts the dignity of man, and I always come away pleased with myself. The latter so magnifies God, that I seem nothing, and I always seem oppressed with a sense of my own insignificance and unworthiness." If preaching is to be estimated by the crowds it draws, we believe this man-exalting divine is now *facile princeps* among American preachers.

in proportion as they see and feel what God is. But in order to set forth God effectually for this purpose, his law, which mirrors his perfections in his requirements of man, must be proclaimed in its spirituality and searching import, in its precept and penalty, line upon line, and precept upon precept. The express law of God is but a formal republication of the law written by nature on the heart, although often forgotten, disowned and obscured under the mists of sin. But still it is written there, although sin has blurred the record. And when it is proclaimed in its full import and awful sanctions, it finds an echo and witness in the conscience, that having been drowsed into oblivion of it, is awakened to behold it. The lightnings of Sinai bring out in visible distinctness the writing before invisibly traced on the conscience. For "the conscience meanwhile bears witness." They know the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death. With all the world they become consciously guilty (*ἐπόδοιχοι*) before God. We have reason to fear that too much of our current preaching is more or less emasculated by a deficiency here. We are no legalists. Neither are we antinomian. The law must be proclaimed, not for the purpose of showing us how we can, but that we cannot, obtain life, according to its requirements. It is the grand instrument for producing conviction of sin. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." It is only as the law, in its breadth of precept and awfulness of penalty, is apprehended and witnessed by the conscience, that conviction of sin is felt, that self-righteous hopes are extinguished, or that men are driven from all other refuges to Christ. None will thirst for or flee to the Saviour, till they see their case to be hopeless without him. The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But this conviction can be effected only by manifestation of the law which makes it evident that by violating its precept they are subject to its curse, so it becomes a schoolmaster which leads to Christ. Thus Paul was alive, *i. e.* confident of gaining eternal life, without the law once. But when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died. It slew him. Its manifestations under the light of the law were the death of all his hopes. And he further shows that this was accomplished only by a view of the spiritual and heart-

searching elements of the law. For he says, "I had not known sin but by the law; I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." It is when the law gleams and thunders, that sinners in Zion are afraid, and fearfulness surprises the hypocrites. And it is only when thus "pricked in the heart" by the sword of the Spirit, that they will ask, What shall we do to be saved?

The law is no less indispensable, of course, as a rule of life to Christians. It is the standard of excellence to which they must aspire. They can neither have nor give evidence that they are Christians, unless they are striving after conformity to this perfect standard. The very end of their election, redemption, calling, is that they may be holy as God is holy—a peculiar people, zealous of good works. In proportion as their communion with God becomes perfect, they will be perfect in holiness. But holiness is nothing else than conformity to the law of God. It is true that we do not thus seek a title to eternal life. But thus alone can that life, gratuitously bestowed, exist or manifest itself. Thus alone can we become attuned to, or capable of, the joys of heaven. Although released from the law as a condition of life, yet the Christian joyfully embraces it as a rule of living. He does so, because by the instinct of his gracious nature, he loves the law of God after the inward man, and because the adoption to sonship, which is freely given him in Christ, enables and disposes him to obey it with filial freedom, love, and confidence. He is not without law to God, but under law to Christ. *Having these promises*, he cleanses himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

These commonplaces only need stating, so far as the principle involved in them is concerned. The chief questions which arise, respect the manner of carrying it out. It is here, we judge, that the most serious deficiency will be often found in preaching—a deficiency which too often dulls its edge and destroys its penetrative power. Many insist strenuously on the law, as the standard of goodness which is evermore binding on all rational beings. They thunder its curses upon unbelievers. They insist upon all Christians making it the rule of life. Yet after all, it fails of its due effect in alarming the unconverted, and

purifying the hearts and lives of Christians. In short, it does not reach, enlighten, or awaken the conscience. Why? because it is not unfolded and defined in its import and applications to the manifold relations of our inner and outer life, and the modes of thinking, feeling, and acting therein required. No clear lines of discrimination are drawn, showing precisely where duty begins and ends, and where sin commences either in the form of omission or commission. It is one thing to denounce the curse of the law against the transgressor. It is another to denounce profaneness, or taking God's name in vain, as a heinous sin. But it is yet another, and a very different thing, to point out in clear and graphic delineation the various ways in which this command is violated in thought, word and deed, and to show the criteria which distinguish the lawful from the profane treatment of things divine. This cannot be done, without giving the knowledge of sins before unknown or unheeded, while it relieves the conscience of the sincere believer, not only by defining his duty, but by showing what is not sin, and thus loosing him from the fetters of morbid scruples and groundless despondency. The latter object is often scarcely less important than the former. Many Christians go limping and halting all their days, in the fetters of a Judaical, Pharisaic, or ceremonial spirit; or of a superscriptural strictness and severity on some one or more points of Christian morality. This may make them harsh, sour, censorious, dejected, uncomfortable to themselves and their brethren. But such weights and consequent besetting sins must be laid aside, before they can run with patience and joy the Christian race. Instead of mounting up on wings as eagles, they grow weary, and their soul cleaveth to the dust. Those who undertake to be more righteous than God's law, in any respect, will be sure to compensate their work of supererogation by greater license in some other form of sin. We once knew a candidate for the ministry who denounced as a sin, eating meat, and drinking tea and coffee, and, if we remember right, any violation of Professor Hitchcock's prescriptions for avoiding dyspepsia. He ended with becoming the hierophant of a conventicle of free-love Perfectionists, and doing what he might, to turn temples into brothels. Take the law of the Sabbath, in regard to supe-

riors and inferiors, indeed, the whole decalogue, and let it be so expounded, defined, and applied, that men must see not only what is, but what is not a violation of it—let the preaching of duty be clear, thorough, didactic, casuistic—and would it not oftener leave the arrows of the Lord sharp and rankling in the hearts of his enemies, and promote beyond measure the sanctification, the blamelessness, the usefulness of Christians? Is it not thus, and not otherwise, that the word becomes sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart? So is it, and not otherwise, that it becomes profitable not merely for doctrine, but “for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

These principles with regard to the inculcation of the law, apply of course, *mutatis mutandis*, to the whole sphere of evangelical duty; *i. e.* of duty as amplified in its scope, as modified in its source, rule and end, by the gospel. This is only saying that in summoning men to do their duty, we ought to explain and define so clearly as to preclude all mistake, what duty is.\* It is simply asserting the didactic element in preaching, which in the light of reason and scripture must needs be an integral and fundamental part of it. The commission given to preach the gospel to every creature, is given by another evangelist as a commission to teach all nations, to do and ob-

\* It can hardly be necessary to enter a *caveat* against straining this maxim beyond the bounds of reason and even possibility. Even the applications of principles can be given by the preacher only in derivative principles of greater or less generality. He cannot go into the particular questions of fact, on which, in each case, the question of duty depends. To do so, would be to teach all knowledge, which is impossible, while the attempt to do it would be worse than ridiculous. Thus, that it is a duty to keep our promises, and to make none which are unlawful, or beyond our power to fulfil; and consequently that none ought to undertake the practice of law, medicine, statesmanship, or any calling, without competent qualifications to do aright, what they thus promise to do, is evidently within the province of the pulpit. But who will say, that it is within its province to teach law, medicine, politics, engineering, or bricklaying? Such knowledge, without which none can do their duty in these callings, must be learnt elsewhere. To lecture on Hydropathy and Allopathy, the merits of our various political parties, old line and new-line, straight and crooked, on the right method of tailoring, or plastering, is not to teach or preach the gospel, and if done under colour thereof, it is simply a desecration.

serve all Christ's commands. The instructions given to Timothy and Titus terminate very much in showing them whom, what, and how they shall teach.

We have dwelt the longer on this point, because we are persuaded that not a few are labouring under certain misconceptions regarding it, which impair their vigour and usefulness as preachers. It is a vulgar notion, that all didactic preaching is dry and uninteresting. Hence many have deep prejudice against what they style doctrinal preaching. They crave warmth and life. They want earnest, hortatory discourse. They deem this practical and profitable. But let practice be urged in an instructive way, which displays its grounds, reach, and limits; which produces not merely some vague excitement, but shows them what they ought to be and do, and they stigmatize it as dull, didactic, and doctrinal. We do not dispute that there may be instructive preachers, who by their jejune style and frigid manner, are obnoxious to this complaint. This might happen, whatever the matter of the sermon. But in many cases the objection is aimed at the things said, not the manner of saying them. It is related of the late Professor Stuart, that during his short but efficient pastorate, he dwelt much on certain doctrines of grace, which had been neglected or disparaged by his predecessor. The people were roused. Some said one thing and some another. The result, however, was that his preaching was in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power; his church was filled with eager listeners; and experimental piety was greatly and permanently promoted. Some of his hearers, restive under a tone of preaching to which they were unused, begged him to give them less doctrine, and more practical sermons. He complied with their request, and commenced delivering clear and thorough expositions of the divine law. In a short time, however, the same auditors waited upon him with a request that he would return to the doctrines. They had enough of practice. The truth is, aversion to legitimate preaching, whether of doctrine or practice, originates in one source. It is simple aversion to truth in its antagonism to corrupt nature, which, if doctrinal, requires a correspondent practice; if practical, has its roots in a correspondent doctrine. For truth is in order to goodness. Hence they prefer some

transient and blind excitement of feeling, to that discovery of truth which alone can awaken sound evangelical feeling; which purifies while it quickens the heart, because it gives light to the understanding, and thus makes permanently wiser and better. We have said that preachers are in danger of being influenced by this vulgar prejudice, and to flatter themselves that they can benefit a large class most by imparting to them heat without light. We apprehend that such heat can be but a momentary glow of sympathetic or animal excitement, as flashy as its cause. The rational soul can feel only in view of what it first perceives. Emotions must be founded on and determined by cognitions. Christianity is not a religion of blind feeling or capricious impulse. It is a religion of truth. It sanctifies by the truth. And the great duty of the preacher is, "by manifestation of the truth to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Our religion is not, as some one has said, like the moon, giving light without heat, nor like the stove, giving heat without light, but like the sun, giving perennial light, and warmth, and life.

If there is any force in these views, they lead to the conclusion, that the true interest, life, and power of preaching, lie in the exhibition and enforcement of Christian truth and duty; in the justness and force of the answers it gives, to the great questions, What shall I believe, what shall I love, what shall I do, in order to lead a righteous, sober, and godly life; and that, when Christ appears, I also may appear with him in glory?— in a word, in the Christian light it sheds on the intellect and conscience, to the end that it may mould the heart. The feeling awakened by such preaching will be salutary, Christian feeling. The greater the clearness, fervour, and vividness with which such truths are set forth, and sent home, the better. And we may add, that all other sources of interest in a preacher and his sermons, are aside of, if not athwart, the true aim of preaching. That the preacher be admired; that he fascinate by poetry or oratory, by philosophy, or any excellency of speech or wisdom, may answer a great many purposes. But it may all be, without preaching the gospel, or disturbing the thoughtless, or guiding the anxious soul, or edifying the people of God. We by no means underrate a good report of them that are

without. We appreciate the importance of being in favour with all the people, and giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed. But we know, too, that a woe is upon those who preach not the gospel, and of whom all men at all times speak well. We should esteem the solemn awe, the deep thoughtfulness of the worldling, the alarm of the presumptuous, the ray of spiritual comfort stealing in upon the contrite soul, the devout feeling and holy purpose springing up in the breast of one and another, on leaving the sanctuary, a more precious testimony to the power and excellence of the discourse, than all the plaudits of graceless worldlings, and genteel professors, who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The self-searching, the humility, the tears of penitence, the sweet and confiding faith, the comfort of hope, the movement of the soul from self and the world, toward God in Christ, with which so many heard the preaching of a Nettleton or Alexander, are a thousand-fold higher attestations of pulpit power, than all the encomiums ever lavished upon merely magnificent oratory. It was a common question among the hearers of the famous Shepard of Cambridge, (who was wont to say that all his sermons cost him tears,) as they left church on the Sabbath, "Who was wrought upon to-day?" These are the best seals of the genuineness and apostolicity of a ministry: "By their fruits shall ye know them."

In the foregoing remarks, we have necessarily anticipated much that applies equally well to what follows. The effect of preaching the law faithfully, will not be to encourage men to attempt to gain life by keeping it, but to show them their utter inability to keep it, and their hopeless condemnation by it. Convincing them of their ruin, it fills them with a sense of their need of a Redeemer. This is the great central truth of revelation, and the foundation of true religion. For "other foundation can no man lay." Therefore, while, as we have shown, God must be set forth, first of all, and above all, in preaching, he must,

3. Be preëminently set forth as "God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses." It were a poor and unworthy work to smite, and not to heal; to tear, and not bind up; to kill, and not make alive. Hence, since



He, who by death overcame him that hath the power of death, alone can deliver us from sin, our paramount office is to declare Him, who is the way, the truth, and the life. As for us, our mission is to "preach Christ and him crucified; to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness, but to them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." We need not labour to prove to the Christian, that

"Christ and his cross are all our theme."

All else converges towards him, or radiates from him. It tends to lead us to him, or flows from our union to him. All unfoldings of God, in his perfections and glories; all exhibitions of the character, condition, and duties of man; all inculcations of doctrine and practice, if true and scriptural, lead the soul directly to the Lord Jesus Christ, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. "Ye believe in God," says Christ, "believe also in me." True faith in God involves faith in Christ, as soon as he is set before the soul; for in him all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily. The first archangel never saw

"So much of God before."

We behold his glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Faith in God then is implicitly faith in Christ; it is a germ which will unfold itself as such, as soon as Christ is presented to it. The law slays, thus showing us that Christ is our only life. So every doctrine, every duty, all legitimate matter of preaching, of whatever sort, culminates in Christ, in whom all things shall be gathered into one, and who filleth all in all. All duty leads to him, to discharge the debt incurred by its non-performance, to obtain strength for its future fulfilment; while the wisdom, power, and love displayed in Christ, evoke the highest love and adoration, and incite, while they enable us to render, grateful and devoted obedience.

But upon this general view there is no cause to dwell. Few Christians will deny that Christ should be the centre and substance of all preaching. It is only upon some of the consequences and bearings of this truth, that there is occasion for remark.

1. We apprehend that preachers are in little danger of excess

in setting forth Christ objectively to their hearers. He, God in him, is the great object towards which their faith, love, hope, obedience, and devotion, are to be directed. They are Christians only as they thus bow to that name which is above every name. They are complete in Him who is the Head of all principality and power. Without him they can do nothing. Life, faith, love, hope, come of looking to him, not to themselves, or to anything which they or other men can spin out of themselves. It should never be forgotten that Christianity, although working an inward renovation by the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost, develops this change in accordance with the laws of our rational and moral nature. No Christian affections can arise except in view of their proper objects. These objects are found in Christ, the God-man, our Saviour, in his person, offices, and works. Of course, we do not mean to advocate any monotonous repetition of any single or isolated truth in regard to him. There is no need of this. One of the most remarkable treatises in our language, is that of Bell, showing how much of God is evinced in the human hand. A friend of ours has in contemplation a similar treatise in regard to the honey-bee. If these diminutive objects require volumes to show the extent of divine imprint upon them, can there be any lack of variety, any need of monotony, in exploring the infinite compass and relations of the Redeemer and his work? All life contains inexhaustible variety in unity which never tires by monotony. How much more He who is the Life, and combines in his own person a divine life, a human life, and the source of all life, out of whose fulness we all receive, and grace for grace! The endless sides and aspects in which he stands related to his people, enable us to view him in relations ever fresh and diversified, while yet he remains the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

2. It hence follows, that the way and grounds of vital union to Christ should be thoroughly and abundantly set forth and cleared up in preaching. The nature of saving faith, as distinguished from all counterfeits of it; its simplicity, as distinguished from all the entanglements with which unbelief would embarrass it; its naked essence, as simple trust in Christ and his righteousness, should be, in one form and another, a fre-

quent theme of preaching, and habitually inwoven with the whole texture of our discourses. This must be done, even if it incur the danger of seeming repetitions. It is the grand requisite to the birth of the soul into the kingdom of God. Simple and rudimentary as it is in Christian teaching, free justification is an article in which men born under the covenant of works are dull learners. There always are those in every congregation who are thinking and inquiring on the subject of religion, but who have never known what it is to believe on Christ to the saving of the soul. There are always babes in Christ, and weak believers, who tremble and stumble in their Christian walk, because they have no adequate view of the free, gratuitous, and full justification which faith embraces and insures merely for the taking. At this point, too, not a few older Christians, "when, for the time they ought to be teachers, have need that one teach them which be the first principles of the doctrine of Christ." Many ministers have been surprised, in conversations with the sick and dying, to find persons who have been their hearers all their days, in a mist on this simple and vital question, How can a sinner be justified before God? They know, indeed, in general, that it is not by their own, but by Christ's righteousness; yet, until the Spirit takes the scales from their eyes, they will be found, in some form, to be working up a righteousness of their own. They will think they must in some way make themselves better, before they can be fit to go to Christ, or he can receive them. Many believers often waver at this point. They doubt whether persons so unworthy have any warrant to appropriate to themselves the Saviour's righteousness. It is of great importance, that all inquiring, doubting, trembling souls be brought to see clearly the true nature of justification, which inures to those that believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly, that so they may stagger not at the promise, but be strong in the faith, giving glory to God. Nor can the preacher well expend too much of his strength here. All the liberty wherewith Christ maketh free; all filial confidence, love, and devotion; all holy strength and courage to serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives; all that is sweet, genial, and buoyant, in our spiritual state, depend upon it. Thus there is peace and joy in believing.

Thus we obtain righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Thus alone can we be delivered from the spirit of bondage and slavish fear, or feel ourselves in such a relation towards God as enables us to serve him with a true heart and right spirit. To the carnal eye, it indeed seems impossible that free justification should not encourage licentiousness. To the spiritual eye, it is the purifying spring from which good works must flow, and cannot but flow. We are not to get life in order to come to Christ, but to come to Christ that we may have life.

There is a class of theologians and preachers who involve this whole subject in perplexity, by the theory that love precedes and is the spring of evangelical faith, and that none but penitents are warranted to trust in Christ. The effect of this is to make men feel that until they can find within themselves evidences of penitence and love, they must consider the mercies of the gospel, as Boston says, "forbidden fruit," which it is unlawful for them to touch. On this subject, confusion of mind is the easiest of all things, and the clear truth among the most important. It is true, that no faith is genuine without repentance and love. So faith without works is dead. It is also true, that faith, although in the order of time simultaneous with commencing love, repentance, and good works, is, in the order of nature, before, conditional to, and causative of them. Love can only arise from faith's perception and belief of the excellence and glory of Christ and his cross, and of God as shining through them. It arises, as they see

"What wisdom, power, and love,  
Shine in their dying Lord."

But we must discern and believe in this loveliness before it can excite our love. And when we believe and see it, it cannot but draw the heart. Another consideration is, that until we are in that friendly relation to God in which justifying faith places us, we cannot confide ourselves to him. We feel that our sins subject us to his righteous displeasure, and that we merit and must receive vengeance at his hands. Now love is impossible towards those whom we dare not trust, because we are subjects of their righteous wrath. So faith is indispensable to love. And since all works not inspired by faith and love, are slavish, dead works, it follows, that although there be no

faith without repentance, love, and holiness, yet faith is their antecedent and cause, as truly as the sun of its beams, and life of breath. We apprehend that a clear view of this point is of great moment in guiding inquiring souls. He is paralysed in making the gospel offer, who cannot, without conditions, bid every thirsty soul come and welcome; who is constrained to tell sinners that they must get rid of their inward distempers and maladies before coming to Christ, instead of going to him at once for the removal of sin and guilt. This is preaching a fettered gospel, and it produces a fettered piety. It gendereth to bondage. It is alien from the sweet and simple faith, the filial confidence and freedom, the buoyant yet humble hope, the cordial love and genial devotion of the gospel; and which result from going at once to Christ for all, receiving all as a free gift from him, and thence giving all, in love and gratitude, to him. We think this view is sustained by the whole drift of scriptural representations. According to these, faith purifieth the heart: it works (exerts its energies) by love; it is the victory that overcometh the world. This view fully accords with the absolute necessity of love, repentance, humility, and good works, to salvation. Faith, which does not exert and evince itself in these, is not saving faith. Though we have all faith and have not charity, it profiteth nothing. Nor do the calls to repent, with the promise of pardon annexed, conflict with; they rather corroborate this view. On what is this pardon based? On Christ. How apprehended and applied? By faith. When the wicked are exhorted to forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts, and turn to God, who hath mercy, and to our God who will abundantly pardon, it is only a form of teaching, that faith in God's pardoning mercy is prerequisite to true repentance. The definition of the Catechism is a true summation of scriptural teachings on this subject. "Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience."

The mistaken theory to which we have adverted, of deriving faith from love, and not love from faith, has, we are persuaded, a strong tendency to generate error on the subject of the sin-

ner's inability. The preacher does not see his way clear to direct the sinner immediately to Christ for deliverance from this, and all other evils and miseries of sin. If he cannot bid the sinner go out of himself at once to a strength which is made perfect in his weakness, nor till he has procured penitence, or love, or some other robe of clean linen with which to go, the question arises, How shall he get all this? How can he be incited to work and strive for it? The answer is, the preacher must be prepared to tell him he is able to accomplish it, or else he is hopelessly paralysed, and can do nothing, but leave the inquirer passively awaiting the sovereign afflatus of the Spirit. Hence various fictions of natural, and we know not what other, ability, have been devised to bridge over this chasm. But the inability of the sinner though moral, is real, and inconsistent with anything that can properly or safely be called ability. All modes of teaching which have any other effect than to lead men, under a sense of their own helplessness, to cast themselves on Christ for strength to lead a Christian life, are delusive and mischievous. We are not sufficient for anything, as of ourselves; our sufficiency is of God. When we are weak, then are we strong in the Lord and the power of his might. This is the whole theory of the Christian life. The just shall live by faith; not faith in their own ability, but of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for us. The whole may be summed up by adding to the article of the Catechism on repentance, those on faith and effectual calling. "Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel." "Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel."

3. A few words will suffice, after what we have already advanced, to show our views of doctrinal preaching. We can hardly conceive of a Christian discourse which does not implicitly contain, and, with greater or less explicitness, articulate a Christian truth or doctrine. Christian doctrines are but the truths of Christianity. The only real question then is, what

Christian truths shall be preached, and in what relative proportions? Here the word of God is our true model and guide. But shall not certain doctrines be suppressed, although taught in the sacred oracles? Here again our answer is, preach the word. "All scripture is profitable for doctrine," as well as other things, whoever may wish the ninth chapter of Romans, or any other part, expunged therefrom. Generally, the objection to preaching doctrines has reference to those doctrines which the objector dislikes. If he can prove them untrue or unscriptural, his objection is valid, not otherwise. All Christian affections and purposes are inspired by a view of Christian truth. They are otherwise impossible. And there is no Christian truth, which, presented in its due proportions and surroundings, does not tend to nourish some holy affection. There can be no doubt, therefore, that it is a fundamental part of the preacher's vocation, to make these truths clearly understood, as the very condition of true faith, holy living, whatever is involved in right practice. The inculcation of doctrine is sometimes stigmatized as dull and unprofitable; as offering the mere dry bones to souls craving the nutritive milk and meat of the word. We do not deny that there may be doctrinal preaching obnoxious to this charge. We do not think sermons should be theological lectures, didactic or polemic. We think doctrine being clearly defined and established, should always be developed in its practical and experimental bearings. So all Christian practice should be based on its correlate doctrines, and rooted in Christian principle, in order to be of that kind which accompanies salvation. As to fervid discourses which would stir the feelings without illuminating the understanding, we have already said enough. The attempt to edify the Church without doctrinal instruction, is like the attempt to build a house without foundation or frame-work. Let any in derision call the doctrines "bones," if they will. What sort of a body would that be which was flesh and blood, without bones? If any present them in skeleton nakedness, divested of their vital relations to life and experience, this is the fault of those who do it, not of true and proper doctrinal preaching, which on one of its sides is practical and experimental. In fact, the two should never be torn asunder, any more than the flesh and bones.

They should ever blend with and vitally interpenetrate each other, and be pervaded by the unction of the Holy One. No sane man will contend for mere dogmatic abstractions in the pulpit. Much less should it be a theatre for philosophic or metaphysical disquisitions. But it should be a theatre for unfolding, illustrating, enforcing divine truth proved by the testimony of Him for whom it is impossible to lie, to be apprehended by the intellect, and vouched for by the conscience of man. We do not believe this truth so devoid of interest as seems to be supposed by many, who on this account studiously shun it. We believe it to be the only material on which most ministers, who have no coruscations of genius, especially eccentric genius, with which to charm their hearers, can rely for awakening a permanent interest in their ministrations. While there is any religion in the world, he will hardly fail to interest his flock, who feeds them with knowledge and understanding. Dr. Emmons, whose sermons were in a remarkable degree clear and icy metaphysical reasonings, far less attractive than the plain truths of Scripture, read off in the most passionless manner, always had an audience of eager listeners. He said in his laconic way, "I have generally found that people will attend, if you give them anything to attend to."

Polemical and controversial preaching is doubtless to be avoided, except so far as the preacher is called to combat the lusts and errors of hearers. In this sense, faithful ministers will always be obliged, like the apostle, to "teach the gospel with much contention." All preaching is immediately or remotely an assault upon the deceits of sin, and the refuges of lies in which it entrenches itself. And it may happen, when errorists are stealing the hearts of the people, that, with heavenly wisdom and prudence, ministers must dispute daily, as did Paul, the things of the kingdom. This is one thing. To bring the *odium theologicum* into the pulpit; to be fond of holding up other bodies of Christians to reproach and derision; to appear more anxious to gain the victory over our adversary, who has no chance to defend himself, than to save the souls of them that hear; to display wrath, and bitterness, and clamour, and evil speaking, in a place that should be radiant with Christian benignity; or, even without this, to be always thrusting out the



horns dissevered from the body of Christian doctrine and practice, may accomplish a great many things. But we have never seen it productive of any signal fruits of faith, humility, penitence, love, and devotion. In general, it will be found, especially so far as the pulpit is concerned, that the positive and able inculcation of the truth is the best defence against error; and that the more completely impersonal and uncontroversial it is, the less likely is it to arouse those carnal and malevolent feelings which always grieve the Spirit of God. This is the general principle. Cases may arise in which duty requires another course; but they should be exceptional and emergent.

4. In combatting the errors and lusts of men, we do not believe that any great good is effected by abstract metaphysical and philosophical arguments. They are usually unintelligible to the common mind. They are the "wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God," and which no preacher is commissioned to employ; and if he condescends to found his claims on his philosophy, one man's philosophy is as good as another's. He has a higher sanction for all that he proclaims, even the testimony of God, which shines in its own self-evidencing light throughout the Scriptures. Besides this, he has the witness of the consciousness of his hearers to attest what he affirms in regard to their moral state, their ill-desert, their need of a Saviour, and their chief duties as Christians. Thus, for the principal parts of his message, he has proofs more effective, and exercising a far higher convictive power, than any ingenuity of speculation. And here he has an advantage which largely compensates for the natural apathy and aversion of men to the gospel. He speaks by divine authority, and not as the scribes, if he is true to his trust. Their consciences meanwhile bear him witness. Any other basis of his teachings is of little efficacy in producing scriptural faith. For this is faith, not in any philosopheme or hypothesis of man, but in God and his word; and it must stand, not in the wisdom of men, but the power of God. It is beyond all doubt, then, that the preacher's discourse will be instinct with penetrating, convictive, spiritual, purifying energy, just and only in proportion as he appeals to the authority of God and the consciences of his hearers. This is wielding the sword of the Spirit; and when we use his sword, in devout

dependence on him, we may look for his presence to give it an ethereal temper and penetrant edge. Such preaching, though it come not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring the testimony of God, will doubtless be in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

As the Spirit works the new creation not by any violation of, but in unison with, the nature and laws of the rational soul, as he persuades while he enables us to embrace Christ, and does this by giving efficacy to the external persuasions of the word read and preached, so the true method of bringing men to the knowledge and belief of the truth, is, as in all cases, to proceed from the known to the unknown. All moral and Christian truths are concatenated and interdependent, like the members of a living organism. Each one either supposes or is confirmed by all the rest. Had we adequate faculties, we should doubtless see, in regard to all these truths, what we now see of some, that they involve all the rest; just as the zoologist will tell from a tooth or a bone all the other parts of the animal to which it belonged. To a very great extent, this mutual connection of the various portions of moral and Christian truth is, or ought to be, known to the preacher, and is a chief element in his reasonings and pleas with all classes of hearers. Few are so totally imbruted, as to be blind to the simplest moral truths. In the light of these, the evidence of higher truths to which they have been blind and indisposed, may be made to appear—as surely as from the letters of the alphabet we may syllable out words, sentences, discourses, all literature. The recognition of the distinction between moral good and evil, cannot be developed without revealing sin, guilt, the need of repentance and redemption, and from these first principles of the doctrine of Christ we must go on unto perfection. As sin is deceitful and blinding, so we must strive to dispel its bewilderments. As it is madness, we must use the fragments of truth and sanity still left, for the restoration of so much of reason as is shattered or lost. In this view, a sound and prayerful discretion is to be used, as to the time and circumstances for declaring the various portions of the counsel of God, the whole of which we may not shun to declare at a proper time. Otherwise, though we give each one his portion, we may fail to do it

in due season, and may oppress with meat, by them indigestible, those babes in Christ, who are not as yet able to bear it. It may indeed be the preacher's fault that they are such as have not their senses exercised to discern between good and evil, and are still such as have need of milk and not of meat; yet in forwarding their growth in knowledge, he must, like all other skilful teachers, adapt himself to their stage of spiritual attainment.

5. Here arises the question, as to the extent to which prudential considerations, and the principle of expediency are legitimate in determining the matter of preaching. We are met by two classes of scriptural instructions, which in sound are contradictory, but in sense are perfectly coincident. The first are those which demand the fullest regard to the dictates of prudence and expediency. They teach us to refrain from lawful things which are inexpedient, to please our neighbour in order to his edification, to become all things to all men, if by any means we may save some. Here the strongest sanction is given to the principle of expediency. We are taught with still greater emphasis, "though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed;" that we may not shun to declare the whole counsel of God; that we may not do evil that good may come; that we must be faithful to the testimony of Jesus, and the truth of his word even unto death, if we would receive the crown of life. There is no question that our duty is to preach the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. All seeming discrepancy here disappears, if we have recourse to the familiar ethical classification of actions as good, bad, and indifferent. In regard to acts in themselves morally right or wrong, no license is given to neglect the one or do the other, out of regard to any considerations of expediency. We are not to lie or blaspheme, or refuse to confess Christ and his gospel, though we might thus save our own lives, or prevent the crush of worlds. No instance can be found in which Paul did or sanctioned such things, strenuous as he was for expediency. On the other hand, in regard to things indifferent, i. e., in themselves neither morally good nor evil, expediency is the governing principle. And, by expediency, we mean tendency to promote what is morally good, or

prevent what is morally evil. To give a familiar example. As to whether we shall worship God and abjure idols, there is no option. But as to the style of dress and equipage I shall adopt, this is a matter to be determined wholly by its relation to my ability to discharge my just obligations, and my influence for good or evil upon my fellow men. For intrinsically, linsey-woolsey and satin sparkling with diamonds are on the same moral footing. We think that the application of these principles to preaching is not difficult or obscure.

1. The minister has no discretion as to setting forth the whole body of divine truth in the course of his inculcations. He may not add to, or take from the word of God.

2. He may not, with a good conscience, when in any way questioned or put to the test, disown, or give it to be understood that he does not believe, what he does believe to be the truth in Christ, on any consideration or pretext whatsoever.

3. But since he cannot, in any one discourse, or in any limited period, traverse the whole circle of divine truth, he must exercise his own conscientious discretion as to the times and occasions, when each respective part is to be so brought forth as to divide to each his portion in due season.

4. As to all matters indifferent, whether of act or word, private and public, they are to be regulated by the single aim of giving the truth more facile and effective access to the souls of men; whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, all must be done to the glory of God and the edification of souls.

5. With regard to rightly dividing the word of truth, in the foregoing cases, as well as all others, much must doubtless be left to Christian prudence; a want of which, more frequently than any other fault, impairs the usefulness of clergymen, and ejects them from their positions. Dr. Dwight says, that by far the larger part of the forced dismissals of pastors within his knowledge were attributable to this cause. There is, however, a general principle in regard to the distribution of the different portions of divine truth, which results from all that we have advanced, is plainly enunciated in the Bible, is enforced by the example of prophets, apostles, and Christ himself, and which no man can safely disregard. In a religion in which mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, are met together,

men must be made to behold both the goodness and severity of God. Great evil results from the disproportionate or exclusive exhibition of either the stern and awful, or the benignant and alluring aspects of the divine character. One class should not be suffered to overshadow the other. The soul's welfare requires that neither should be forgotten or ignored: "For the better understanding of this matter, we may observe, that God, in the revelation that he has made of himself to the world by Jesus Christ, has taken care to give a proportionable manifestation of two kinds of excellencies or perfections of his nature, viz. those which specially tend to possess us with awe and reverence, and to search and humble us; and those that tend to win, draw, and encourage us. By the one, he appears as an infinitely great, pure, holy, and heart-searching judge; by the other, as a gentle and gracious father, and loving friend. By the one, he is a pure, searching, and burning flame; by the other, a sweet, refreshing light. These two kinds of attributes are, as it were, admirably tempered together in the revelation of the gospel. There is a proportionable manifestation of justice and mercy, holiness and grace, gentleness, authority, and condescension. God hath thus ordered that his diverse excellencies, as he reveals himself in the face of Jesus Christ, should have a proportionable manifestation, herein providing for our necessities. He knew it to be of great consequence, that our apprehensions of these diverse perfections of his nature should be duly proportioned one to another. A defect on the one hand, viz. having a discovery of his love and grace, without a proportionable discovery of his awful majesty, his holy and searching purity, would tend to spiritual pride, carnal confidence, and presumption; and a defect, on the other hand, viz. having a discovery of his holy majesty, without a proportionable discovery of his grace, tends to unbelief, a sinful fearfulness, and a spirit of bondage."\*

We shall bring these observations to a close, by a few suggestions relative to the extent of the preacher's obligations to give instructions to men in respect to worldly relations and interests, economic, social, and political.

\* Edwards's Works. New York edition, vol. iv., pp. 224-5.

1. With regard to all that is commonly understood by the moral and worldly virtues; i. e. virtues which often exist without piety, and are commanded by the natural conscience, and the code of worldly respectability, as well as by the gospel, such as temperance, chastity, honesty, veracity, fidelity, kindness, &c., it is needless to say that they are of self-evident obligation; that if they may exist without piety, piety cannot exist without them; and that they should be enjoined, as they are in the Bible. They should be enforced, not merely by natural and worldly, but by spiritual and evangelical motives. Yet they ought not to fill any large or overshadowing place in preaching. This should be mainly occupied with the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and its heavenly truths and requirements; and with these subordinately, as its subordinate though indispensable fruits. Such is the uniform course of the New Testament preachers; such is the most effective way of promoting morality. It makes the tree good; so the fruit must be good. Unless it be a very distempered and unevangelical type of religion, the most religious men are the most moral individuals and communities, in all countries and all ages. Those who have laid out their chief strength in preaching worldly morality, have had but slender success. Without the fascination of genius, they can seldom keep a congregation together. The mightiest preachers of the everlasting gospel, who have done most to bring men to the obedience of faith, have produced the greatest moral reformations. Dr. Chalmers's experience is a remarkable instance of "philosophy teaching by example." He relates, that in his earlier ministry, he plied his congregation with enthusiastic discourses on the moral virtues, and made it his chief labour thus to effect a reformation of their morals. They loved the preacher, and were charmed with the magic of his eloquence. But they did not reform their morals. He at length felt the hollowness of mere morality, and was brought to the cross for pardon and peace. He at once altered the whole matter of his preaching. In place of splendid moral essays, he gave them clear and fervid discourse on sin, guilt, and retribution; on salvation by the Redeemer's blood, and righteousness; on spiritual regeneration, faith, repentance, holy living, heaven, and hell. Multitudes were awakened, and converted to the

Lord. And not only so, but there was a thorough, wide-spread, and permanent reformation of morals. *Ex uno disce omnes.* The pools of worldly morality will stagnate, unless vitalized by streams from the fountain of life.

As we have said that morality should be taught not so as to crowd into the supremacy of the gospel, but as its necessary subordinate fruit, so the less immediate and direct, the more distant and inferential the duty, the more distant and chary should the pulpit be in treating it. "At the last extremity of a branch, it is difficult to retain a view of the stem. Represent to yourself, for example, sermons on neatness, politeness, &c. Some topics of this sort, doubtless, may be approached, but it must be done incidentally; they should never furnish the subject for a sermon."\*

2. With respect to the social and civil relations, and all interests merely worldly, Christianity insists on the exercise of religious principle, and all the virtues of our holy religion in every sphere of life and action. There can be no doubt that God will honour those that honour him in all the spheres and offices of life. They will be blessed in their basket and store, their going out and coming in. Society is elevated and purified, individuals and families are prospered, every worldly interest of man thrives in proportion as religion pure and undefiled before God and the Father prevails. This is its inherent tendency, as it exalts the whole man, and restrains those corrupt passions that blight the body as well as the soul, and destroy both in hell. It is a blessing also often conveyed in honour of his religion by the undercurrents, and secret prospering gales of his gracious providence. But it is often withheld in his wisdom, or prevented by counteracting causes. How often has persecution hunted the people of God to the dens and caves of the earth, while faith has enabled them to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and to count not even their own lives dear, knowing that in heaven they have a better and more enduring substance? In all cases, they that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, and endure chastening. The promise will be fulfilled, that through much

\* Vinet's Homiletics, translated by Dr. Skinner, pp. 82, 3.

tribulation they shall enter the kingdom of God. Their worldly prosperity, so far as it is vouchsafed, follows their religion as the shadow follows the substance. But it is not the substance, it is not that with which religion concerns itself, otherwise than in ways incidental and subordinate. On the contrary, its effort is to raise the soul to a sublime superiority above the transient and worldly. It puts no value upon these further than as they may be linked with and subserve our eternal welfare, than as the scaffolding to the edifice. We are surely not mistaken here. We are charged to take no thought what we shall eat, what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed; to look not at things seen and temporal, but at things not seen and eternal; if we are called, being servants, to care not for it, but, if we may be free, to choose it rather; but always to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, with the promise that all other things shall be added unto us, which our true well-being demands. Of the whole doctrine of Scripture on this subject the Apostle gives the following beautiful summation. "But this I say, brethren, that the time is short. It remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away."

In correspondence with all this, it is evidently no part of the preacher's commission to make the promotion of men's worldly interests any prominent object of his inculcations. On the contrary, such a course is clearly discountenanced in the Bible as not only repugnant to religion, but suicidal; for, by displacing the divine and eternal element, it fails of its benignant fruits for this world. For these bear not the root, but the root beareth them. So far as we have observed, those who most signalize worldly interests in preaching, so far from eternizing the temporal, merely secularize the spiritual. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this world." With respect to those who would encourage servants to be restive under the yoke, or contemptuous of their masters, Paul denounces them as "men of corrupt minds, sup-



posing that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." We think that the same principle holds in this matter, which Christ propounds in regard to individuals. "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." Preachers who spend their strength in efforts at worldly amelioration, usually spend their strength for nought. Those who spend it in promoting godliness, usually build up every interest of man, temporal, spiritual, eternal, individual, and social. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come." All forms of mistaking gain for godliness, betray a radical misconception of the whole nature and scope of the gospel. Says John, "they are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God. He that heareth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

It being thus clear that worldly amelioration, however it may be a consequence, is not the direct object of the preacher's inculcations, it follows, that the pulpit, in proportion as it is engrossed with interests less than those of the soul, God, and eternity, usually suffers loss itself, and thus indirectly damages what it undertakes to promote. Let a preacher devote his pulpit to any questions social or civil, which respect simply their better or worse condition in regard to the good things of this life, and he will generally accomplish less for their temporal, to say nothing of their eternal welfare, than if he had devoted himself to the promotion of that godliness which, with contentment, is great gain.

As, however, religion has its development and sphere of action in the world, and includes all social and relative duties, simply because it includes all duty, and requires us to do all things to the glory of God; it of course requires us to act in all good conscience in reference to our country and government; to do what we may consistently with paramount obligations, to make our officers peace, and our exactors righteousness; to procure just and salutary laws; to sustain their authority and

execution; so there can be no question as to the propriety of inculcating these great, and (among Christians) undisputed principles, from the pulpit. Indeed, as Christ taught us to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's; as Paul enjoined obedience to the powers that be, not only for wrath, but for conscience' sake, so he expressly charges ministers to "put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Of course this means a real, an authorized magistrate, not a pretender or usurper; and demands obedience to laws enacted by a competent authority, not by a mob, or any unauthorized assemblage. And it further means obedience to real rulers, as to all other superiors, so far, and so far only, as they do not require us to disobey God. In this case we are clearly taught we ought to obey God rather than man. To obey a magistrate who requires us to blaspheme, is simply to abet him in his rebellion against God. In such a case our only course is to sustain the law, not by obeying its precept, but, if need be, by enduring the penalty. It is no strange thing, to be required to witness a good confession at the cost of martyrdom.

We have no reference here to those great and abnormal emergencies which speak for themselves, when the people, in the exercise of their own *vis medicatrix naturæ*, by the sudden violent throes of revolution, cast off a government intolerable or outgrown, for one suited to their wants. We only mean to say, that the foregoing principles are proper, and at times necessary to be inculcated in the pulpit. But when we pass from these principles, which must commend themselves to every enlightened conscience, to the details of their concrete application, in actual politics, other considerations have place. There is no question that men ought to regard it, and to be taught to regard it, as a duty to promote the elevation to office of the most faithful and competent men, as well as the enactment of just and equal laws. But few sane men would deem it safe or edifying for the pulpit to discuss the respective merits of different candidates; or whether the tariff, or sub-treasury, or statutes enfranchising and making voters of foreigners were just and salutary. Similar embarrassments may exist, however

firm the preacher's personal convictions, as to whether a given man, or set of men are the legal officers they claim to be. It is not so much on first principles, which few men possessing a moral sense will dispute, as the application of these principles to the vast and complex affairs of nations and communities, that the angry questions of party politics arise. And here, imperfect knowledge, interest, prejudice, party predilections so distort and bewilder, that however strong our own personal convictions, we see vast numbers earnestly enlisted on opposite sides, whose piety cannot be questioned. We do not undertake to say that these questions may not sometimes have an ethical or religious side too obvious and urgent for the pulpit to neglect. But we do say, as the result of considerable observation, that we never knew the pulpit throw itself into the issues that divide political parties, without contracting a stain and a wound upon its sanctity and spiritual power. It inevitably soils itself by such association with the unworthy passions which embitter and disgrace political conflicts. We have not known any instance in which political harangues from the pulpit aided the party espoused, or gained a voter, or did anything more than give intolerable offence to partisans of the opposite side. Others may have witnessed better results. "As to patriotic and political sermons, they are rather to be avoided, and yet in certain grave circumstances, we may be obliged to touch upon such subjects in the pulpit. . . . We must beware, lest we inflame on this hearth, the passions of the natural man. How shall we now speak of politics without taking a side? We must remark, also, the utilitarianism which for the most part is concealed in these subjects. It is better for the preacher, as it is for the navigator, to keep himself in the high sea; it is in the neighbourhood of coasts that shipwrecks are most frequent."—*Vinet's Homiletics*, pp. 86-7. And it may be added, that with the ample sources of political information afforded by a free press, exigencies can rarely occur which call for its dissemination from the pulpit. Its office should rather be to moderate the fierceness of these violent conflicts, by holding up the contrasted greatness of the Infinite and Eternal.