

THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

VOL. XV.—FEBRUARY, 1888.—No. 2.

REVIEW SECTION.

I.—BETTER TRAINING OF CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY.

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ANYTHING like a full discussion of the subject suggested in the title to this paper would include a consideration of four points, namely,

1. The Choosing of Teachers ;
2. The Choosing of Students ;
3. The Choosing of Subjects to be Taught ;
4. The Choosing of Methods for Teaching.

Of the four important points thus stated, I select for present treatment two only, the first and the last. In treating them I will try to be as direct and as practical as possible, saying what I have to say with frankness and with candor.

In the first place, then, as to the choosing of teachers for the work of theological instruction.

I do not think we exercise careful wisdom enough in seeking to get the best teachers obtainable for our theological students. One reason is that we do not sufficiently recognize the difference between teachers and teachers. Good teachers are never anywhere in abundant supply. The teaching gift is rare ; it is perhaps as rare as it is precious. I have myself, first and last, had a great many different teachers, but among them all there are not more than two or three whom I could conscientiously pronounce eminently good ones.

Consider. To be an eminently good teacher, you must first know ; second, know how you came to know ; third, know that others are not necessarily to take that same path, or any same path, in coming to know ; fourth, be quick in intelligence to see, in each several case, what path to knowing is the one natural and best for another to take ; fifth, alert ever to understand that other's conception, right or wrong ; sixth, sagacious to divine his difficulties ; seventh, fertile in providing alternative forms of expression for an idea to be conveyed ; eighth, indefatigably patient to insist on the learner's really getting what is conveyed ;

South America, was walking with a group of savages in the forest. Its grandeur enchanted him, so that he could not restrain his emotion, but burst out singing this Nature Hymn. The savages were thus first

taught religious truth by the overflowing gladness of a Christian soul. Is not this the ordinary agency of evangelization: the gospel well in the heart, bubbling up and dropping its spray upon others?

MISCELLANEOUS SECTION.

REV. ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D. D.

BY REV. CHARLES PARKHURST.

SEVERAL years ago we were roaming among the alcoves of a large theological library, scanning titles for new books whose future acquaintance we desired to make. A volume caught the eye, entitled "Sermons Preached at Manchester." We had never heard of the book nor the author. We opened by chance and began to read. Surely it was a "find" to us! It brought just the message which we had long needed and had been unconsciously seeking. This was the text (Hebrews xii: 1): "Let us lay aside every *weight*, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." The word which caught me and the thought in exposition of it was the word "weight." The human has weights, infirmities, weaknesses, that are not in themselves sins. The inspired writer makes that distinction, and teaches that lesson, in the words selected. Reared in the provincial environment of the New England Puritan, and fed on the old tenets—robust and pure, but rigid and severe, with no charity for the infirmities of men—we needed the solace of the new truth we had found out of the Word; but the congregation to whom we stately ministered needed the great truth more. That sermon was read and reread, and wrought a revolution in our apprehension of Christianity and in our preaching. Dr. Maclaren became our teacher. We laid hold of every volume that could be obtained and every magazine and paper which contained his writings or utterances. We are getting the ser-

mons which he preaches weekly now, when ripest and best, in *The Christian Worker*, published at Manchester, England, at No. 5 Norfolk street. We specially mention this fact for the benefit of other American admirers of Dr. Maclaren who would be glad, weekly, to lay hold of his sermons, and to say also that the paper is an excellent Christian publication in every respect, and sustained, for philanthropic purposes, by the noble Christian men of Manchester, without regard to denomination.

When, therefore, we planned to cross the Atlantic, heart and mind were fixed upon this: We will see and hear Dr. Maclaren; and we did it, though we went two hundred miles to accomplish the purpose.

It was July 17, 1887, that we sat in his chapel. It is a beautiful modern church, of brick, seating easily 1,500 people. "We are greatly crowded," the usher said to us, and 2,000 people were packed into the church when we worshiped there. It was no unusual event, however—it is so always when it is pleasant. We were delighted with the congregation—the finest in face and dress that we have seen in Europe. A large proportion are young people. The young are recognized in this church, for in a chorus choir there are several boys and girls, and it is a delight to see the zest with which they sing. While we stand singing, two men have come the whole length of the aisle, hoping to secure a seat, but are obliged to turn about and go back, so greatly crowded is each pew. Chairs are used, and people sit back of the pulpit, where they can only hear, so anxious are they to secure

the service. Surely there is some attraction about the preacher to draw people thus! We walked three miles to-day to hear a distinguished divine in another part of the city, generously advertised in the daily press and on bill-boards, and, withal, a church with not two-thirds the seating capacity of this, and it was not half filled. What makes the difference? The people know who they desire to hear, and they will take the trouble to find the man. How is it?

Dr. Maclaren is in his pulpit. He is tall and spare, with small but most comely shaped head and attractive face. In early years he must have been a handsome man. I can best describe him in look, thought and manner by saying to the American that he is a twin brother of Dr. C. S. Robinson, of New York. Both are Scotch, and there is a striking resemblance between them. In thought, style and manner of utterance they are much alike. Their pens are dipped in the same inkhorn. We read for years, and with very much profit, Dr. Robinson, in his articles in the *Sunday-School Times* of Philadelphia, on the current lessons. Dr. Maclaren now does weekly the same work; but so much alike are they with pen, and so much pleased am I, that I hardly know whether it is Robinson or Maclaren that I am reading.

Dr. Maclaren does not aspire to look clerical. He wears no gown, not even the white cravat. He does not look especially ministerial. He would look in place in a bank or office. We would that he had more years before him. Such men should live as long as the patriarchs—but has God better work for him to do? Somehow, the men over here who have seemed to take most pains to exhibit the clerical have been the men of the least weight in the pulpit.

Dr. Maclaren does not impress you with favor in his preliminary services. To an American, they seem

much too long. He is constrained and artificial in reading his Scripture and hymns, and lifts his voice laboriously into a head tone, to be heard. In prayer there is not that tender, childlike breathing of the soul out to God that you would anticipate. He prays twice and at some length before the sermon. English congregations sing more than the American, and better, and it is considered strange in the worshiper if he does not try to sing. Singing is praise worship. Forty-five minutes Dr. Maclaren has used in the preliminary service. A lady at my side said at the close of this part of the service, "You are to be disappointed." We should have been seriously disappointed if we had left the house at that moment.

His text was Matthew viii : 24-26. As he can be read so easily in *Sunday-School Times*, *Expositor* and volumes of sermons, we shall not give an abstract of the sermon, but a fuller view of the man himself. He had neither manuscript nor notes before him. In a few words he unfolds his text. He tells his congregation clearly how he is to present his theme. His subject possesses him and he is taking fire. Thought transforms him. You would not think him threescore and two. We never saw man in the pulpit whose movement of body and limb could be so agile and rapid. Face flushes, eye gleams, pointed finger and open palm speak to you. His voice has lost all restraint, and is resonant, tender, impressive. It seems as if God was speaking to you. Every person in the house, so far as we can see, is held in solemn and impressive awe as the truth is borne home, the truth of God, to conscience and practical life. That is preaching, we said; and we have not heard the like in Europe. We do not wonder that the church is crowded. We do not wonder that London and other cities offer their best pulpits to this man and beg him to enter them.

What is the secret of such a re-

markable ministry? Can we learn it for ourselves, that the years left us may be more efficient?

1. Dr. Maclaren is a *preacher*. Here is his power. What makes him a preacher? What are his peculiarities? He preaches the Word. He lives in the Word. He believes the preacher is a herald. God has given the preacher a message to declare. He must understand this message, be full of it, and reveal it to men. They tell of him that every day since he began his public ministry he has read one chapter, each, in the Old and New Testament, in the original. Dr. Maclaren is an exegete of the whole Bible. He makes it his business to declare the truth as it is revealed in Christ and apply it to the needs of his hearers.

2. Dr. Maclaren is a man of thought. He has made most thorough preparation on his particular theme. He always says something to his people. He gives them something that will stick. To me this is his superiority over Spurgeon. He thinks more, and better. So thoroughly does he master the text, and make his divisions, and so natural and unique are they, that it seems impossible to you in treating the same text to add to or get away from his abstract. His sermons hold you in an inextricable grip if you are to preach from the same text. You do not intend to be a plagiarist, but unconsciously you borrow from him. The imaginative in him is studiously cultivated, though the use of it is natural, and his rhetoric and style are poetical and most fascinating. He is equipped with illustrations and pointed, practical allusions, which he uses with great effect. In one word, he is *interesting* to the hearer, and all the time interesting. There is no cant, no religious platitude, no iteration of the same thought to tediousness. You are held in rapt attention, and yet eager for more. He does not speculate about systems of philosophy; he does not talk to you about

dogma; ecclesiasticism is not his theme; but he just preaches the words to the intuitions of his hearers, and they sensitively respond. Some one has likened him to Frederick Robertson, of Brighton. We do not see any ground for the comparison. Robertson was a Thomas, and gave frank utterance to his doubts. Maclaren believes with his whole soul, and preaches not doubts but faith. This is not said in disparagement of Robertson, for we have an intense admiration of this unique man, but to mark the unfitness of the comparison. The best lesson which Dr. Maclaren teaches the preacher is the necessity of direct and absorbing work upon the Bible in order to be able to speak with interest and power. If we mistake not, he is working a most happy revolution here in teaching the clergy that the Bible only needs hard, faithful study in order to yield that which will be most fresh, vivid, and interesting, not to say helpful, to our congregations.

3. The earnest directness with which he preaches. Every utterance has a personal application. He means *you*, and it is impossible to parry the truth or give it to the stranger behind you. With most tender, loving sincerity, he sends every utterance home as if you were his only hearer. He preaches to no class; his word is not for the imbruted sinner, but for every soul who does not recognize Christ as Lord and Master. He does not exhort, but he does quite frequently make most direct appeal. His blood is warm, and through him there flashes the truth of God, and in its light you see how unchristlike you are, though he does not tell you so. He never scolds nor rants; he is never pessimistic, but he makes you feel that your ideal is unworthy of yourself, unless Christ be the centre and motive power within you. Through him in his pulpit effort God speaks to you; and that is preaching. There comes over you as you listen the unspeakable and joyous impression that he indeed is a man of

God. he is sincere, he walks and talks with God; and here we touch the secret of his permanent influence and power. He might be everything else that he is, but if he did not thus "abide in Christ" he could not wield with such unction the truth of God.

4. We must gratefully notice, in closing, his gracious catholicity of Christian spirit. He said from his pulpit, "The sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated at the close of this service; all friends of Jesus who would consider it a privilege to gather with us are kindly invited to

do so." That invitation from the lips of a Baptist sounded delightfully strange to the ears of an American clergyman; but it is characteristic of the spirit of fraternity which Dr. MacLaren always exhibits. We sat with him about the table of the Lord and were refreshed and comforted. We heard Mr. Spurgeon give such an invitation a few Sabbaths since in his own Tabernacle, and men and women of all shades of evangelical faith gladly accepted the invitation. When will our good Baptist brethren in America become thus catholic?

PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

The Temptation of Christ.

IN THE HOMILETIC REVIEW (Dec.), a sermon by Josiah Strong, D.D., which ought to command general interest is on "The Temptations of Christ," presenting a view which the author thinks unusual, if not novel. Personal study of the subject led me years ago to substantially the same conclusions, which appear far more satisfactory and significant than those held by perhaps most Bible readers.

One is left to wonder, however, why Dr. Strong fails to apply to the first of these recorded temptations the same interpretation that he gives to the other two. For this appears to be an appeal to precisely the same sentiment in the soul of Jesus as that which gave weight to those; so that, instead of three separate temptations, appealing to as many different desires—the craving of food, the vanity of display, and the lust of power or of property—we really have a single, though threefold, temptation, appealing to one desire and aiming at one result.

Jesus was about to enter upon His life work as the preacher of a new dispensation. He had just come from the baptism at the river Jordan. He had heard the voice of God saying to Him, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." As Dr. Strong says, "Perhaps now,

for the first time, he gained a full consciousness of His Messiahship." It was in the full flood of this self-consciousness that He was assailed by the Prince of Evil.

And the one object for which He had come into the world was *to redeem the world*—to recapture it out of the grasp of Satan and restore it to God. To this strong desire the enemy makes most subtle appeal, the force and cunning of which we are sure to miss except as we view it in the light of these circumstances.

First: "*If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.*" Perhaps that scene by the Jordan was only a fancy of your excited brain. Perhaps after all you are in no way different from other men, and possess no ability beyond theirs. "Command that these stones become bread;" the result will make it certain whether you are or are not the Son of God.

It is easy to see how there might have been a real temptation in a suggestion like this, with one who would not be moved by an appeal to a mere desire for food, however hungry. The reply of Jesus fits the interpretation now given. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." As much as to say: I have heard the divine