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Literary & evang. mag.

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EVANGELICAL AND LITERARY

MAGAZINE.

Because of the house of the Lord our God that is in thee, I will seek thy good.
Psalm cxxii. 4.

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VOL. V.

Monthly Jan. - Dec. 1822



Richmond:

PUBLISHED BY N. POLLARD, SIGN OF FRANKLIN'S HEAD,
MARKET-BRIDGE.

1822.

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THE
EVANGELICAL AND LITERARY
MAGAZINE.

REFLECTIONS, ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE YEAR.

It has been frequently recommended by moralists and divines, to look back and see how past time has been spent, and past privileges have been improved. This retrospect ought to be taken every evening, before we close our eyes in sleep. The man who settles his accounts every day, will have comparatively little to do at the end of the year. Still, however, it is necessary that the daily results should be put together, and the whole amount of profits and losses ascertained. To the *man of business* this is no very difficult task; to the *careless* and *unskilful*, it is well nigh impossible. This is analogous to that solemn *moral reckoning* to which every individual is bound to call himself. It is, indeed, difficult under the most advantageous circumstances to do *this thing* well. But the man, who has faithfully reckoned with himself every day, and accurately recorded the results, has, at the close of the year, incomparably the advantage of him who has gone on, without considering what he was doing or whither he was going. Still worse is the case of him, who puts off this *necessary business* till the close of life. His whole book of accounts lies in utter confusion before his disordered mind, and he fears even to attempt that scrutiny, which will soon be thoroughly made by his omniscient judge. It is surely, then, best for every one to begin this day the work of settlement with his conscience. Opposite to the names of several in the list of subscribers, it is necessary for the Publisher to enter the word *Dead*. So it has been every year; and so it will be at the close of this year. Who the individuals are, concerning whom it is written in the book of God's purposes "This year thou shalt die," it would be presumptuous to inquire. In this uncertainty, it is wise in all to live as though this were to be the last period of their lives.

When a man comes to die, on surveying his past conduct, he sees many things, which he heartily wishes had never

For the Evan. and Lit. Magazine.

**OBSERVATIONS ON THE MANNER OF EDUCATING YOUNG MEN
FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.**

THE whole of my experience and observation convinces me of the importance of the clerical office. The religious character of a people is very intimately connected with the character of the ministers of religion among them. This is less the case, indeed, with Protestants than with others, because "the Bible is their religion," and they are constantly directed to make that sacred volume the standard of truth and the test of opinions. But while this is so, involved as people commonly are in the business of life and the cares of the world, their opinions are, in a great degree, regulated by the expositions of divine truth heard from their teachers, and their thoughts and feelings are moulded by those to whom they look for instruction.

But while this is unquestionable, it is equally true, that the great mass of people will have nothing to do with any religious system, which does not deeply interest their feelings. Abstract reasonings and general theorems will produce no effect; and men will turn from them as cold and unprofitable speculations. The majority in every age will more readily embrace all the absurdities of idolatry with a splendid ritual, than that simple theism which makes 'a man's own mind his church,' and employs itself in silent contemplation.

It is, moreover, undeniable that the truths and ordinances of Christianity, whether in the simplicity in which they were delivered by Christ and his apostles, or as they have been embellished by men, are calculated to take strong hold of the human heart, and powerfully to excite the affections. Indeed religion is the most mighty of all moral causes; and often produces, in a very short time, effects wide in their range and all-important in their influence. These effects are beneficial or injurious, according to the characters of truth or falsehood belonging to the religion which produces them. Fervent, enlightened piety is always salutary; while a perversion of the religious principle is always more or less hurtful.

These remarks have been made for the purpose of showing that the character of the ministers of religion is a subject of great importance, and that it may well excite a deep and general interest. This truth is acknowledged by many in our country, and unusual efforts are making to establish and support seminaries for Theological education. Several writers for the Magazine have expressed the high gratification de-

rived from this fact, and cordial wishes for the success of these efforts, by whatsoever body of Christians they may be made. In these sentiments and wishes I heartily concur; and as an evidence of my sincerity, offer the following remarks on some particulars in the conduct of a theological education.

The first thing which I shall notice is an instance of inattention, scarcely excusable, to a matter of real importance to a preacher of the gospel—I mean, *the manner of reading*.—Psalms or Hymns, and portions of Holy Scripture are to be read by the minister almost every time he officiates; and surely it is desirable that he should read in such a way as clearly to express the sense to all his hearers, and not to offend persons of delicate ears by any gross improprieties. I know that these are trite remarks; but they are not made without being called for. The general truth, however, is too obvious to be insisted on: I shall therefore mention a few particulars which lately have been forced on my attention.

In giving out the Psalm or Hymn, many preachers seem to govern their voice, and regulate their pauses altogether by the measure, without regard to the sense. And in addition to this, the long syllables are generally uttered with a strong percussion of the voice, and the shorts are scarcely audible: a full pause too, is made at the end of every line; so that the march of the voice is like that of a man with a long leg and a short one hurrying on his way, but at every four or five steps brought to a dead stand. Thus I have often heard the noble Hymn of Watts, entitled the *The power of the Gospel*, read thus.—The italics mark the syllables made emphatical.

This is the *word of truth* and love.
Sent to the nations from above.
Jehovah here resolves to show.
What his almighty grace can do.
This remedy did wisdom find.
To heal diseases of the mind.
This sovereign balm whose virtues can,
Restore the ruined creature man. &c.

To this I will add, that strange mistakes are often made by preachers and other readers, respecting emphatical words. Reference is had here, to the too common practice of laying the emphasis on substantives instead of adjectives. I do not design to pursue this subject far, and my meaning may at once be illustrated by an example. Let any one read the following passages in Milton, first laying the stress of his voice on the substantives which occur in the several sentences,

and then on the adjectives; and let him mark the difference in the effect. Nothing more will be necessary to show him the mistake alluded to.

————— On a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus.

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of Angels, with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy. Heaven rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas filled
Th' eternal regions.

Heaven opened wide
Her ever during gates, harmonious sound,
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of glory in his powerful Word
And Spirit coming to create new worlds.

Meaning here only to drop hints for the improvement of others, I observe, in the next place, that many preachers, who converse in an easy and natural manner, as soon as they begin to read or speak in the pulpit, change all their tones, and, if I may use a *cant term* which I apprehend is about to be forced into general use among religious people, *solemnize* their voices, as though religious services were utterly at war with all that is graceful and natural in articulation. The process of *solemnization* is thus—A deep, somewhat guttural, or half guttural and half nasal tone is adopted, and the articulation of the leading vowels in most words is prolonged, for the purpose, no doubt, of exhibiting the appearance of due solemnity in the service of the Majesty of heaven. They who have always been accustomed to this management, witness it without offence perhaps; but it is odious to such as are used to hear voices modified by genuine and powerful feelings, and conformed to nature in every tone. Students and teachers too, may rely on it that art here is often worse than useless. Let a man of correct taste thoroughly understand, and feel the truths which he utters, and he will employ more natural tones, than can possibly be acquired by all the frigid lessons of art.

These remarks are made, under the conviction that this subject has not been attended to as its importance deserves; and with the hope, that they may be useful to those for whom they are intended.

To these observations on the manner of reading, I wish to add a few hints relative to gesture. The fashion of standing like a stock in the pulpit is growing obsolete. Even where sermons are *read*, the reader not unfrequently shows vigorous determinations to be an orator. Unhappily, however, he is often obliged to look one way and stretch his arms another—his hands are raised to heaven, and his eyes are on his paper. Some preachers that I have seen, struck with this incongruity, make their gesture first and read the sentence afterwards; and others read first, and then throw out their arms or smite on their breasts as occasion seems to require. Which is the preferable method, I do not pretend to determine. Let reading preachers settle this question for themselves—As for myself, I am most fully convinced that graceful and powerful oratory is out of the question when sermons are read. They may be learned, they may be instructive; the composition may be elegant, and even eloquent; but there will be no genuine lofty oratory in the delivery. The preacher when he reads, had better not aim at this, but at *reading well*.

To set my views of this subject in a strong point of light, let us suppose a deaf and dumb man, whose thoughts are expressed entirely by looks and gestures, to be a spectator of one of these reading orators, and endeavouring to catch something of the preacher's meaning by observing his movements in the pulpit; how utterly confounded would he be by the incongruous motions of arms and eyes every moment presented to his observation! Now that which would entirely confuse and perplex the *sourd-muet*, offends every person of correct taste.

But the old fashion of *stock-still* reading, as was said, is passing away, and very laudable efforts are making to cultivate pulpit eloquence. There is danger, however, lest students should be trained to an artificial manner of delivery, altogether inconsistent with high excellence. I have many times lately seen the arm extended, and the hand waved, when I could perceive no reason for it except that the speaker thought that he ought not to stand still. This has induced me to offer the following observations—and they may pass for just what they are worth.

The use of gesture in speaking is founded in nature. But all that prompts to this use and recommends it may be included in the two following observations:

1. All articulate language is imperfect; that is, as a vehicle of thought it does not completely convey our meaning.

Where language is very poor, as is the case generally with savages, various movements of the body are employed as signs of ideas to relieve this poverty. Among the deaf and dumb, these signs are the only means of interchanging thoughts and feelings. Very nearly similar movements of the limbs or muscles are adopted by the deaf and dumb generally for this purpose. This remark may be extended to all who use poor languages, or languages where the same articulate sound is employed to express a number of ideas. There is something in nature which leads to all this. Gesture then may, very naturally and with great force, be used to explain an ambiguous term, or to express an idea with more precision than can be given to it by articulate sounds.

2. Our bodies, in their several parts are at the control of the will, and move in obedience to our volitions. But there is an intimate connexion between our volitions and the various affections and passions that are awakened in our bosoms. Hence, besides the changes produced in the colour of the face and the expression of the whole countenance, strong feelings of any sort are generally accompanied with corresponding movements of the limbs—and this spontaneously, without effort and without thought. Now these movements are perfectly understood by the spectator, without explanation; and they are known to be expressions of some deep emotion or powerful feeling. But such is human nature, that man sympathises with his fellow when he exhibits strong passions. There is a contagion in them. Hence directly appropriate gestures, that is gestures which truly express ardent affection or high wrought passion, make a mighty impression. They bring before the eyes the things of which the orator speaks, and one does not so much hear of them as see them.

This subject might be pursued at great length; but these two observations, contain, in my judgment at least, the whole reason and philosophy of this part of oratory. And if I am not herein greatly mistaken, they show the inutility, not to use a stronger term, of many of the measures adopted by teachers and students for the improvement of eloquence. Declaiming in colleges and seminaries, generally produces that artificial manner of intonation and gesture, which is *unnatural* although common. Almost the only advantage to be derived from it, when best conducted, is the correction of obvious faults. To learn any thing beyond this, nature must be diligently studied. The student must carefully observe what may be called the oratorical action of men in common conversation, and when under the excitement of various passions: and this,

not for the purpose of *imitating* nature, but of *being natural*. The most exquisite imitation in a moment betrays itself. But when a man studies oratory in real life, he insensibly acquires a facility of sympathising with his fellow men, of entering fully into feelings expressed before him, and finally of feelings expressed by himself. And this is the mystery of what is commonly called oratory. A speaker is thus prepared to exhibit himself with perfect truth to nature, because he *really does feel*: otherwise, he only caricatures nature, because he endeavours to imitate that which he *does not feel*.

In addition to this, let the mind be well stored with good knowledge, the taste refined by familiar acquaintance with the best models, and finally the speaker well assured that he clearly understands the subject on which he means to discourse, and there is no danger but that he will deliver the conceptions of his mind in a clear, forcible and impressive manner.

This is a subject of much more importance than many suppose. Because in proportion as the manner of a preacher is purely natural, will be the conviction among his hearers that he is really in earnest; and other things being equal, in proportion to this again, will be their disposition to receive the message which he is charged to deliver. But this message is so important, and so deeply involves all man's best interests, that a student of theology who has any portion of a right spirit will spare no pains to qualify himself as fully as possible for his all important office.

In connexion with these remarks, I wish to drop a single hint on the manners in general, of those who sustain the sacred office. I regard this subject as worthy of notice, because the whole power that clergymen possess, is a moral power, and every thing deserves attention, which opens their way to the hearts of the people, and enables them to win their affections. Now it often happens that a clergyman has spent his childhood in the school-house, his boyhood in the academy, his incipient manhood in college and in the seminary, and is turned out a preacher with no manners but those of a student. These are awkward and retiring in promiscuous company; and not unfrequently call forth ludicrous remarks from the gay and unfeeling. Such things injure the dignity and usefulness of the preacher, and are therefore to be avoided. But it ought to be remarked that some, in avoiding this extreme run into another a thousand times more offensive. A young *petit maitre* clergyman, with snow-white handkerchief, jet-black gloves, and golden-headed rattan,

a dandy in dress, bold in manners, loud in conversation, fond of jesting and fond of lolling, who seems to claim the best place in every room, and the nicest thing at every table, and has a merry saying, or a fine compliment for every fair one, is an object of utter disgust. Thanks to heaven! the creature is rare in this country. I have sketched his character merely for the sake of observing that the true way here, lies between extremes. Unaffected politeness ought to characterise the minister of the gospel. But unaffected politeness has its seat in the heart. It flows from cordial goodwill to all around us, from a hearty disposition to make them as comfortable and happy as possible. The *natural* indications of this disposition constitute that which is expressed by the term *politeness*; and no tedious and expensive processes of artificial training are necessary for its acquisition. A little observation of the manners of the *truly* well bred, the diligent culture of one's own heart, the cherishing of truly benevolent affections, and the habit of attending to circumstances which give pleasure or pain in the ordinary intercourse of society, is all that is necessary.

But the simplicity of this mode by no means renders attention to the thing needless. On the contrary, this ought to be a part of christian discipline. The ministers object is to do good. And he has to win his way, through hosts of prejudices, and against formidable opposition. It is only by LOVE that he can gain the victory.—But this remark is connected with so many important matters, that I must reserve farther observations on the subject, for a future communication.

HOLEM.

EXTRACTS FROM WHITFIELD'S JOURNAL.

(Continued from Page 321, No. 6. Vol. V.)

Monday, Nov. 26th.—Left Ipswich by seven in the morning and called as I went by his house on the Rev. Mr. Rogers, father to the person where I lay, and senior pastor of the Church. He came out and saluted me most cordially and was ready to weep for joy. He is a great grandson to the famous Mr. John Rogers of Dedham and is so happy as to have three sons and one grandson who have experienced and now preach the truth as it is in Jesus. The Lord was good to me in the way and brought me according to my desire in a private manner to Boston just as it began to grow duskish. I was met by and received into the house of one Mr. John