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THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—THE PREACHER IN HIS STUDY.

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AUTHOR OF "LIFE AND WORDS OF JESUS," ETC.

To enter the pulpit without devout and deep preparation is to mock God as those did who, in the days of Malachi, offered the lame, the sick, and the blind on His altar. "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts." But knowledge demands honest and extended study. An empty mind can give out only emptiness. Of course there may be fluency, for the thinnest liquids flow most readily, and nothing makes such a sound as a hollow drum. Strictly extempore preaching must be a flood of mere words which may pass muster for the moment, but leave the audience wondering what this ear-pelting was all about. Nor is a discourse less extempore merely by being written out. If extempore on the paper it can be no more when read off. He who writes his sermons without storing up material beforehand only keeps dropping a bucket into an empty well, and grows old in drawing nothing up. We must *have* before we can *give*.

But in such a sacred profession as the ministration of religious truth the first preparation for profitable study must necessarily be sincere personal religiousness. Luther's words are hence forever true: "*Bene precasse est bene studuisse*"—right praying makes right study. For it is self-evident that the words of Job, "The inspiration of the Lord giveth understanding," must be specially true of those studies in which the loving and reverend knowledge of God is the very beginning of wisdom. How, indeed, shall he attune himself to heavenly meditations who is a stranger to communion with Him in whom they both begin and end? A prophet is one who speaks as the mouthpiece of

NOTE.—This periodical adopts the Orthography of the following Rule, recommended by the joint action of the American Philological Association and the Philological Society of England:—Change *d* or *ed* final to *t* when so pronounced, except when the *e* affects a preceding sound.—PUBLISHED.

them," and makes provision for their welfare. He leads them in the green pastures and beside the deep, still waters; and when in danger, with His rod and staff supports them.

(d) He does this not only at risk of danger and injury:—"seeing the wolf,"—but at the actual sacrifice of life:—"I lay down my life for the sheep."

(e) In thus laying down His life for them He brings to them a new and higher life, of which they become receptive:—"I am come that they might have life and have it abundantly."

(f) This a common life for all His true people in all time, and with His Father's approval:—"other sheep I have"; "my Father loveth me because I lay down my life for the sheep."

(g) A common blessing sought for all these: unity of love in the One Shepherd with one fold:—"that they may all be one."

Inference.—Know Him, the Shepherd. Know in love all His real people, His flock, the objects of His interest and affection.

THE SOCIAL SIDE OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY PROF. T. D. WITHERSPOON, D.D.,
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It is difficult to get people to distinguish between Christian brotherhood and brotherhood in a particular church, between Christian sociability and church sociability. Here, for instance, are two Christian families living in the city upon the same block. The heads of the families are active Christians. The churches to which they belong are of the same faith and order. They have therefore in the strictest sense "one Lord, one faith, one baptism"; and yet the thought of any real practical brotherhood between them has never entered their heads, because they "do not belong to the same church"; that is, their names are not on the same congregational roll and they do not worship at the same sanctuary. They therefore do not cultivate each other's Christian companionship, or feel any responsibility for each other's spiritual welfare. One of these families holds to the other precisely the relations of neighborly courtesy that it holds to the family of

the man of the world, or the infidel who lives on the same block.

But all at once a marvelous change takes place. For some reason, valid or otherwise, one of these families withdraws its membership from the church where it has previously worshipped, and places it in the same church to which the second family belongs.

And now the pastor of this second family hastens to bear to them the glad news. He rushes into Brother A.'s business office to ask him to go around to Brother B.'s, who has just "put his letter in our church," and give him the right hand. Mrs. A. is duly advertised of her duty to put Mrs. B. at once on her visiting list, and show her all the attention due to a sister in the church. Even the little A.'s are notified that they must now include the little B.'s in all their "social functions"; old grudges that were thought sufficient barriers before must give way now. Christian brotherhood has not been able to secure even Christian fellowship; church brotherhood is expected to work not only that, but social equality, social recognition, social obligations of every kind.

What is the natural result of all this but that congregations come to be regarded somewhat in the light of social clubs? that a man stops, before putting his letter in, to consider whether he and his family are prepared to meet the social obligations that will devolve upon them? that the zeal of the members of a congregation for the admission of a new member is largely determined by the social standing of the neophyte? and that good people whose social position is not assured naturally hesitate about entering a congregation where the majority of the people are in high life?

The writer of these lines has been severely criticized for objecting to this exclusive church sociality, as if he discredited Christian sociality, for contending against a mere congregational brotherhood instead of the broad brotherhood of the whole church of Christ. That there should be warmer and closer

social relations between Christians by reason of their relations to a common Lord, goes without the saying. That these relations should find expression in outward acts of social fellowship, all will agree. The contention of the writer is that the place of congregational worship is not the place to exhibit this sociability, and that congregational lines are not the lines to bound it; that as long as it is made obligatory upon the member of a particular church to know and visit everybody in

that church, we shall have social problems that are self-assumed and that we can not solve; that when we come to the true theory, that we are to know and visit those who live on the same block, or who are providentially connected with us by business or other relations, and to carry our Christian sympathy and helpfulness into all the Christian homes about us, we shall be near the Divine model, and more truly realize the unity of the whole body of Christ.

SUGGESTIONS FROM EXPERIENCE.

THE PULPIT AND THE CHILDREN.

By REV. GEORGE FRANCIS GREENE,
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I. Children and Public Worship.

FORTUNATE is that parish in which the church attendance of children is the rule. But it is to be feared that such a parish is nowadays as exceptional as it is fortunate. The common tendency to regard the Sunday-school as a substitute for the regular church service in the case of children is surely to be deplored. And yet there are those who openly advocate the view that all that the Church has to offer to small children in the matter of public worship may be presented to them through the channel of the Sunday-school. Some time since one of our prominent periodicals for Sunday-school workers editorially claimed that the objection to Sunday-school pupils absenting themselves from the church service is based on the fallacy of regarding the Sunday-school as separate from the church. The argument was to the effect that children may worship God as well in one end of the church as the other—before a superintendent's desk as well as before a pulpit. On the contrary, I claim that there can be no substitute for the formal church service, and that there is a fatal defect in the spiritual

education of those children who have not been trained to attend that service. I present these arguments:

First. So long as what we term the church service is the central event in the Sabbath worship of a congregation, so long, ordinarily, will the final disposition of an individual toward religion turn upon the habit he forms with relation to that service. If that service is to me the leading symbol of worship, and I am permitted or encouraged to slight it, I have thereby learned practically to slight worship itself.

Second. There are spiritual associations to be felt only in the place where the minister preaches, and where the Lord's Supper is celebrated, that are in themselves of priceless value to young children.

Third. If there be any peculiar significance to an ordained ministry there is an influence of the preacher as an exponent of truth which the children of his flock can not afford to be without, and which is limited to the local vicinity of his pulpit. The true function of the Sunday-school is twofold. It is designed to unfold the Word, and to train to worship in the appointed place for worship. If it fails as regards the latter element, it fails at a vital point. Hence it ought to be a part of the business of every pastor to promote the