

preacher himself had previously learned—the true, precise, deep meaning of these fragments of the Word of God? There is thought, to be sure, but it is submitted, obedient thought, not thought setting out, pioneer-like, to explore a path of its own, but thought wholly directed to directing itself, without the shadow of turning, in the right line of God's thought.

How much more fruitful it is intellectually (and it is more fruitful morally, in at least an equal degree) thus to make one's self an empty vessel to be filled from God's Word, than it is to empty a vessel found in God's Word to fill it from one'sself, this the volumes of Dr. Maclaren's sermons impressively show. A text of Scripture used as Dr. Maclaren uses his texts no more hampers and embarrasses preaching, than attachment to the ground hampers and hinders the flight of a kite in the air. The attachment to the ground is a necessary condition to the kite of its rising and staying aloft. So the text, to every preacher who will submit to be bound by it, becomes a condition of stimulated, directed, and unexhausted productiveness. The case is one in which service is liberty. You are free in proportion as you are obedient. Dr. Maclaren's example teaches the intellectual, not less than the moral, advantage to the preacher of vigilant, unbribable fidelity to his text.

It may, in passing, be useful to point out that Dr. Maclaren's title for the sermon just quoted from, "God's True Treasure in Man," is not ideally felicitous. It involves an ambiguity. It quite as naturally seems to announce that the preacher will undertake to show what it is in man that constitutes God's true treasure, as it does that the preacher will undertake to show that man constitutes God's true treasure. "God's True Treasure Found in Man," is a form of expression that would go far toward removing the undesirable ambiguity.

The second feature of Dr. Maclaren's habitual method is a logical, inseparable sequel of the first. As he loyally submits himself, mind and heart, to God's teaching in the Scripture to be preached from, so he actively exerts himself, mind and heart, to know exactly what that teaching is. He never indolently or carelessly assumes that the apparent meaning is the real meaning of the language. He goes to the original Hebrew or Greek of the passage in the best existing recension of text, and, in the light of independent investigation, corrected by comparison of the most competent exegetical authorities, decides conscientiously what God meant in these words to say. This same care is observably almost omnipresent throughout Dr. Maclaren's discourse. If he cites Scripture, even incidentally, in the progress of a sermon, you may count it in the highest degree probable that his citation will be made in the true, and not in the merely obvious, sense of that Scripture. There is, I should be inclined to conjecture, in Dr. Maclaren's preaching—let the estimate be made proportionately to the whole volume of preaching in each case presented to the public—a greater amount of sound exegesis