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Pulpit Fervor.

By Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

A MEMBER of the Stock Exchange told me recently that he had gone into one of the noonday services in Trinity Church, and had listened with deep interest to an eloquent Lenten discourse by a young minister, which was delivered with such fervor that the sweat started on the speaker's face. After describing the effect on himself and other business men around him by this imposed discourse, he inquired, "Why don't all ministers put more fire into their sermons?" This question of my friend the stockbroker is a very pertinent one for every man who addresses his fellow-men as the message-bearer from the living God.

The preaching of the Gospel is spiritual gunnery; and many a well-loaded cartridge has failed to reach its mark from the lack of powder to propel it. Preaching is, or ought to be, a message-bringing from the Almighty. The prime duty of God's ambassador is to arrest the attention of the souls before his pulpit—to arouse those who are indifferent, to warn those who are careless, to convict of sin those who are impenitent, to cheer those who are sorrow-stricken, to strengthen the weak and to edify believers. An advocate in a criminal trial puts his grip on every jurymen's ear. So must every herald of Gospel-truth demand and command a hearing, cost what it may; but that hearing he never will secure while he addresses his audience in a cold, formal, perfunctory manner. Certainly the great Apostle at Ephesus aimed at the emotions and the conscience as well as the reason of his hearers when he ceased not to warn them night and day, with tears.

It cannot be impressed too strongly on every young minister that the delivering of his sermon is half the battle. Why load your gun at all, unless you can send your charge to the mark? Many a discourse containing much valuable thought has fallen dead on drowsy ears, when it might have produced great effect if the preacher had had what the Trinity Church preacher had—inspiration and perspiration. Many and many times, a sermon that was quite ordinary as an intellectual production has produced an extraordinary effect by a direct and intensely fervid delivery. The minister who never warms himself will never warm his congregation. I once asked Albert Barnes, "Who is the greatest preacher you have ever heard?" Mr. Barnes, who was a very clear-headed thinker, replied: "I cannot answer your question exactly; but the greatest specimen of preaching I ever heard was by the Rev. Edward N. Kirk, before my congregation during a revival. It produced a tremendous effect." Those of us who knew Mr. Kirk knew that he was not a man of genius or profound scholarship, but he was a true orator, with a superb voice and a pleading persuasiveness, and his whole soul was on fire with a love of Jesus and a love of souls.

It is not easy to define just what that subtle something is which we call pulpit magnetism. As near as I can come to a definition, I would say that it is the quality or faculty in a speaker that arrests the attention and kindles the sympathy of auditors, and when aided by the Holy Spirit, produces conviction in their minds by the "truth as it is in Jesus." The heart that is put into the speaker's voice sends that voice into the hearts of his hearers. As an illustration of this, I may cite the celebrated Dr. Stephen H. Tyng, the Rector of St. George's Church of New York, who was one of the most magnetic speakers I have ever heard, in the pulpit or on a platform. Every sentence he uttered went like a projectile discharged from a gun. I remember that one evening Henry Ward Beecher and myself were associated with him in addressing a public meeting called to welcome John B. Gough on his return from a temperance campaign in Great Britain. When we had finished our speeches we went to the rear of the hall and listened to Dr. Tyng's rapid rolling oratory. I whispered to

Beecher, "That is fine platforming." "Yes, indeed," replied Beecher; "he is the one man in this country that I am most afraid of; I never want to speak after him, and when I have to speak before him, when he gets agoing, I wish I had not spoken at all." And yet Dr. Tyng's sermons or addresses when put into cold type lost most of their power! Everybody wanted to hear him; very few ever cared to read his books; his soul-conveying power was in the pulpit.

It is an undoubted fact that pulpit fervor has been the characteristic of nearly all the most effective preachers of a soul-winning gospel. The fire was kindled in the pulpit that kindled the peeps. The discourses of Frederic W. Robertson of Brighton were masterpieces of fresh thought, and pellucid style; but the crowds were drawn to his church because they were delivered with a fiery glow. The king of living sermon-makers is Dr. Maclaren of Manchester; his vigorous thought is put into vigorous language and vigorously spoken. He commits his grand sermons to memory and then looks his audience in the eyes, and sends his strong voice to the farthest gallery. Last year after I had thanked him for his powerful address on "Preaching" to the thousand ministers in London, he wrote to me: "It was an effort; for I could not trust myself to do without a manuscript, and I am so unaccustomed to reading what I have to say, that it was like dancing a hornpipe in fetters." Yet manuscripts are not always "fetters";—for Dr. Chalmers read every line of his sermon with thrilling and tremendous effect. So did Dr. Charles Wadsworth, in Philadelphia, and so did Phillips Brooks, in Boston. In my own experience I have as often found spiritual results flowing from discourses partly or mainly written out, as from those spoken extemporaneously.

Finally, while much may depend upon conditions in the congregation, and much aid may be drawn from the intercessory prayers of our people, yet the main thing is to have the baptism of fire in our own hearts. Sometimes a sermon may produce but little impression; yet that same sermon at another time and in another place may deeply move an audience, and yield rich spiritual results. Physical conditions may have some influence on a minister's delivery; but the chief element in the eloquence that awakens and converts sinners, and strengthens the Christian, is the unction of the Holy Spirit.

Your best power, my brother, is the power from on high. Look at your auditors as bound to the Judgment-seat, and see the light of eternity flashed into their faces! Then the more fervor of soul that you put into your preaching, the more souls you may bring to your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Griffing the Commonplace.

That is what is being done now in nature, if in nature or any where else there is anything really commonplace. Every leaf is being transfigured and every wayside weed is putting on its crown. There is no hillside that does not spread before you a panorama of beauty, and if you live in the country you cannot look from any window and not see a picture no artist can rival. And yet it is commonplace if it is not, the weed by the path, the leaf fluttering to your feet? But God puts his brush upon them and as you look you say, "Call nothing common or unclean." Cannot we carry nothing of the same spirit into life? May we not see an autumn glory spread over the whole of it? It is the common spirit in us that makes anything common. It is the drudge who causes any work to be drudgery. George Herbert speaks of a spirit which carried into every effort shall make both it and the action great. Fanciful might have been that servant girl of whom somewhere Mr. Spurgeon speaks, who into the meanness of her daily toil carried so much of the sentiment of redemption that it became symbolic. Washing dishes syllabled prayer, "Cleanse me with hyssop," and when she swept a room it but told her of taking the dust

from the soul. Fanciful it might have been but it glorified her life. And so may all of life be glorified, even the commonplaces of it. It is the spirit of the slave that makes anything slavery. It is the menial spirit that demeans and not the work. At the work bench as in the bank a man may hold up his head if he will. The lowliest task may be glorified if glory is in the doer of it.

Notice.

The Western New Brunswick Baptist Association will meet with the Marysville church on June 26th at 2 p. m. It is expected that the New Brunswick Southern Baptist Association will meet with the Baptist church in St. Stephen the 4th of July at 10 a. m.

We were much pleased to see Rev. J. D. Wetmore on his return from a visit to his old home in Springfield, Kings Co. He is being blest and much encouraged in work at Hartland and vicinity in Carleton Co.

At the Christian Ministerial Association Conference held in St. John last week, references were made to closer union of Christian bodies which are nearly alike. Rev. Dr. Gates, who read a paper in the Conference, expressed his pleasure in meeting with the ministers of the Christian body. Their meeting was, he said, an indication of the fellowship that exists between the body he represents and the Disciples of Christ. He regretted deeply that those who had advocated the one believers' baptism should maintain a separate organization. It was true that there was now hope for Christian union, especially of those bodies having generic or intellectual affinities. He thought the Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists should be one, as should also the Baptists, Free Baptists and Disciples of Christ.

R. W. Stevenson, speaking for the Disciples, expressed himself as entirely in accord with Dr. Gates' expressions, and he looked for the time to come when representatives of the Baptists, Free Baptists and Christian churches would meet to draw closer the bond of unity.

The *Intelligencer* rejoices to hear these expressions of opinion from the brethren, and hopes the time may come soon when the bodies mentioned, and others of substantially like faith, may be one. Such a union would make greatly for the extension of Christ's Kingdom.

—*Intelligencer*.

1. The need of salvation is told in Isaiah. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray." When we realize this fact how comforting to be told that "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."
2. The completeness of the sacrifice is shown in Luke. For us Jesus Christ gave His body and His blood. According to Hebrew ideas this meant His life.
3. The timeliness of the salvation is shown in Romans. "While we were yet weak"—"sinners." It is worth while for young people to notice here that sin is spoken of as weakness. Some seem to think that it shows boldness and strength to sin, but it does not. In this world it is always easier to sin than not to sin. The really strong ones are those that resist temptation and keep on the side of the right.
4. The proper results of the salvation by Jesus Christ is shown in I. John. If He laid down His life for us we ought to lay down our lives for Him. What would you think of a person whose life had been saved by another who would refuse to risk his life for his savior if he were in peril? The life that has been saved belongs to the one who saved it. Your life belongs to Jesus Christ.