

didactic form—the “strong meat” of the Word; not sentiment, not fine-spun theories, or an effeminate faith, or a gospel of “culture” and aesthetics. They were *robust* men, and the staple of their sermons was “bone and sinew,” as well as “flesh and blood.”

4. They preached a *positive* Christianity; not “apologetics,” not a faith of doubts and negatives. They did not “read between the lines” of the Bible, “another Gospel,” a “new theology,” as is now so often done. Their “trumpets gave no uncertain sound.” They did not “beat the air.” They struck heavy blows straight between the eyes of sin and the devil!

5. They were *dogmatists* in the pulpit, as all effective preachers must be. They stood there by Divine right, and spoke words of Divine authority, freighted with eternal weal or woe to all who heard! The faith they preached was “the faith once delivered to the saints”; not man’s opinion, not speculation, not “the higher” or the “lower criticism,” not Shakespeare, not nature, not “modern thought and progress.” They were simply *God’s mouthpiece* to rebellious, dying men. Sin, guilt, perdition; pardon, life, heaven, were all near and actual *realities* to them, and their hearts and sermons were burdened with them, and they were “straightened” till they had laid them off on the hearts and consciences of those to whom they ministered. They preached as men “anointed of God,” “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.”

6. They were not afraid of *written* sermons. Almost without exception they wrote in full and preached from manuscript. This fact may well outweigh much that is now said against the MS. in the pulpit. The practice of careful, pains-taking preparation, did much to give condensation, strength, and logical form and pith to their sermons. They studied, wrote, revised, condensed, and loaded their heavy guns to the very muzzle, and rammed the contents down with a will; and hence when they let off the well-aimed charge, it was no child’s play! There is enough weighty,

logical, compact, burning thought in one of the sermons of Griffin, Mason, Richards, Emmons, Melville, Lyman Beecher, Daniel A. Clark, Eliphalet Nott, Skinner, Hopkins, Bethune, Alexander, Wayland, Rice, Beman, Woods, Finney, Barnes, and others like them, to stock the average modern pulpit for a year.

The Pulpit of to-day has gained in breadth of culture, in erudition, in many of the auxiliary helps to pulpit ministration. The curriculum of our theological seminaries has been greatly extended, and a multitude of new and excellent text-books have been added to the list. But it admits of grave doubt whether the Pulpit has really been *strengthened and made more effective thereby!* Such eminent men as the late Drs. Gardner Spring, I. S. Spencer, and W. B. Sprague, and not a few living men, of broad observation and experience, more than question the wisdom of the change. Certain it is the American pulpit of the past generation, in all that pertains to power and success, the conversion of souls, and the progress of truth and righteousness in the world, will not suffer in comparison with the pulpit of this highly-cultured age. On the contrary, making all due allowance for the changed circumstances and conditions, the preachers now filling our pulpits may study these examples of the fathers, who have passed away, but the radiance of whose glorious ministry lingers still in the midst of us, with profit, and may even imitate many of their masterful gifts, and thereby add to the excellency and power of a ministry which is the bulwark of this great and rapidly-growing nation. A VETERAN OBSERVER.

Breaking Hearts.

There is a point worth considering in the homely advice which Rowland Hill once gave to his Welsh curate: “Never mind breaking grammar, if you can only break hearts.” Delicacy of thought and expression, and a certain degree of fastidiousness even, may be pardonable in a preacher; but nothing whatever—no consideration of a merely literary character—should be suffered to ob-