

## Our Contributors.

### Preaching Outside of the Pulpit.

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

For what purpose did I enter the ministry? is a vitally important question which every conscientious minister will keep constantly before his mind. The answer which he will make to this question will be—I became a preacher in order to bring God's message to my fellow-men, to awaken those who are careless, instruct those who are ignorant, comfort those who are in trouble, help those who are weak, and lead immortal souls to Jesus Christ: in short, my aim is to make bad people good, and to make good people better. To attract people to the house of God is of far less importance than to attract them to Christ; the making a good sermon is mainly of value that it makes a good man. A wise minister will not belittle his pulpit by neglecting to make full preparation for it, nor will he cheapen it by putting there anybody and everybody that he can lay hands upon. At the same time he recognizes that he can spend only three or four hours in that pulpit on only one day of the seven; and whether in the pulpit or out of it, he is everywhere Christ's ambassador.

The Bible is the best theological seminary and in that he learns that his Divine Master delivered two popular discourses which the Holy Spirit has preserved for us; one of them was delivered on a mountain, and the other by the seaside. The great body of our Lord's instructions were in the form of personal conversations with individuals or with his little band of disciples. That quiet evening talk with Nicodemus has shaped all Christian theology and moulded myriads of human characters, and will continue to until the end of time. The apostles pursued the same methods with their Master; and the book of the Acts is largely the record of personal labors for the conversion or the spiritual benefit of individuals. Paul preached public discourses when he had the opportunity; but I question whether his sublime discourse on Mars Hill has ever brought as many souls to the Savior as his brief talk with one poor awakening sinner in the person of Phillippi. The danger with us ministers is that we look at our flock too much as a totality; the word "masses" is a misleading word. We preach on Sunday to a congregation; but God's eye sees only individuals. Guilt is a thing appertaining to an individual conscience; and conversion is the turning of a single soul to Jesus. If we preach to a congregation for an hour or two on the Sabbath, it is a joyful thought to an earnest soul-winner that he can preach outside of his pulpit for more than a hundred hours during the week.

One of the unanswerable arguments for thorough pastoral visitation is that it brings a minister within arm's length of his parishioners. He needs this personal contact for his own benefit. A good library is a good thing; but there is a great difference between a lifeless book on your shelf and the fertilizing study of a book in boots; for every life is a biography. You and I, my dear brother, are helping to make these biographies. Our sermons are addressed to a single soul. "Thou art the man" is the meaning of every loving appeal, every kind rebuke, and every personal invitation. A man may dodge a sermon; he cannot dodge

a personal conversation conducted in the right spirit. A faithful sermon ought to set your people to thinking. In one mind it may suggest difficulties, and when that person meets you he may wish to have the difficulty explained; the door is thus opened for you to remove an obstacle, or to press home a needed truth. In another mind your sermon may have awakened a conviction of sin. The impression may fade away, or it may be deepened if it is followed up by a personal interview. Much of many a pastor's best work has been done in an "inquiry meeting;" but even when no method is used, there will be opportunities for every wide-awake pastor to find out who in his parish is an "anxious inquirer." You ought to have a fixed time in every week when persons can call on you; and if any one breaks into your study during your morning hours for spiritual direction, you ought to rejoice to throw aside books or sermon notes and give him the right of way. The man that wants you is the man that you want. It is an excellent method also to request your congregation to send a request to you if they desire an interview in their homes. Remember how cordially the Master met every one who came to him for light or for healing, and what a long journey he took in order to bring relief to one poor woman in the coasts of Canaan. In dealing with awakened souls nothing can take the place of personal contact. To reach all such from the pulpit only is almost as absurd as it would be for a physician to write his prescriptions from a desk in a hospital instead of going from one bed to another to feel each pulse, and to examine each fever-coated tongue.

No pastor worthy of the name will need to be reminded how strong are the claims on him of the Lord's "shut-ins" whose faces are not seen in the sanctuary. Whosoever you neglect, never neglect the sick—especially those who are in the by-lanes of poverty. There is no more Christlike work than that, and none that will grip your people to you more strongly. The hours you spend in the ministrations of comfort to the sick and the sorrowing will often subject your nerves and your sympathetic sensibilities to a severe strain. The most celebrated pulpit orator in America once said to me; "It consumes more of my nerve force to spend an hour with people who are in trouble than to prepare two sermons." That may be so; but is there any more Christly office in this old sobbing and suffering world than to "bind up the broken-hearted?" What your people want is the ministry of sympathy; and the rich often need it as truly as the wretched poor.

I have indicated some of the ways in which a faithful minister may preach outside of his Sabbath pulpit. There is one style of preaching that is vastly more effective than any other, and that is the irresistible eloquence of a poor, manly, noble and unselfish life.

"My pastor's discourses are very brilliant," said an intelligent lady, "but his daily life is a sermon all the week." The "living epistle" of Paul was as sublime and convincing as any words that fell from his lips on the hill of Mars; for Jesus Christ lived in him. Our people look at us when out of the pulpit to discover what we mean when in our pulpits. Piety is power. Your aim is to produce Christian character, and

what argument so strong, so constant, so persuasive, so heart-reaching as the beautiful example of a life copied even imperfectly after Jesus Christ?—Lutheran Observer.

For DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

### Great Canada.

Land of the beaver, elk and moose,  
And untamed life in various forms;  
Whose plains and forests boundless are,  
Lying serene in midst of storms;  
Unknown to art and man's device,  
Till lost in polar snows and ice.

Vast are thy lakes, immense thy streams,  
Whose flowing waters never cease;  
Dwellings of countless finny tribes,  
Who live in undisturbed peace;  
Strong in an infinite supply,  
Whose source and fountains never dry.

Thy mountains rise like bulwarks high,  
As guardians of a nation's store;  
Of untold minerals, unworked mines,  
Products of nature, rich, galore;  
Unfathomed is the wealth they hold,  
In nickle, iron, coal and gold.

Thy valleys like a fruitful field,  
Rich is their soil, and green their sod,  
Yield fruits and grain and lowing kine  
Treasures of earth and gifts of God;  
And as an ever-smiling land,  
Nature's reward to toiling hand.

Thy towns and cities tell the tale  
Of enterprise, and thought and brain;  
Science, invention, skill and power,  
And all that follow in their train;  
Centres of action, learning, state,  
The things that make a nation great.

Long may thy provinces remain,  
Happy and prosperous and free;  
Together in one common bond,  
Holding their own from sea to sea;  
In one great Federation's might,  
Strong for the truth, for God, and right.

GEO. W. ARMSTRONG.

London, Ont.

### Tact.

BY REV. DWIGHT E. MARVIN.

Talent will carry a man a long distance, but tact will carry him a step further. He who has great talent and little tact will be rated at less than he is, but he who has great tact and little talent will be accorded a place of honor. With some tact is a birthright; with others, it is acquired by hard work and in the face of many failures. Like all other gifts of nature, it does not fall into the lap, but it may be had by purpose and effort. A few brief rules may be in place to help the tactless to be tactful.

1. Cultivate a kindly feeling for every one; you will be apt to speak harshly or injuriously of those of whom you have unpleasant thoughts. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." While kindly feelings may not always make a man say and do the right thing at the right time, they will start him on the road that leads to appropriate speech and behavior and go far to popularize him with others.

2. Keep sweet-tempered. Hold yourself in check. If you allow yourself to get nervously wrought up over little annoyances or irritated at the actions or remarks of others, you will be sure to do and say that which will be out of place and cause you many regrets. Words shot from the bowstring of a tense spirit fly swiftly and pierce deeply. When you are talking with an angry person, use self-control and remember that "a soft answer turneth away wrath."

3. When in conversation be careful not to speak too freely about mutual acquaint-