

So far, then, we have been dealing with acknowledged principles. Individuals may, we suppose, demur to some of these statements, as individuals may doubt the rotundity of the earth or the law of gravitation; but the general assent and consent of all who have seriously studied the subject will be given.

The real question, however, remains. In what sense is extempore preaching legitimate and desirable, and in what sense is it illegitimate or undesirable? We must say at once that unprepared preaching is an offence to God and to man. This is what the Lord Bishop referred to as "extempore thinking." It is a shocking thing to hear of men that they sometimes do not choose their texts until the Sunday, or even until they are in the pulpit. We would rather not discuss such cases. But what shall we say of the preachers who put off thinking of their sermons until Saturday evening, when they are often tired after a hard week's work? If these are the specimens of extempore preachers that Canon Du Moulin had in his mind, we can understand his denunciation. Let it be remembered, however, that, as our greatest preacher, the Bishop of Peterborough, once remarked, there is extempore writing as well as extempore speaking; and sermons written in this fashion will be little better than the unpremeditated effusions of extempore talkers.

There must be careful preparation in order to effective speech. But there is some difference of opinion as to the method of preparation. Writers like the late Alphonse Coquerel counsel the entire writing and memorizing of the sermon. Others, like Bautain, recommend the careful preparation of the thoughts without actually committing them to writing. The first few sentences and the conclusion should be written, they say; but no more.

An intermediate method has been recommended by some and has much to be said for it. We refer to the practice of first writing the sermon, then carefully analysing it, and finally getting possession of the train of thought and the consecutive points, without attempting to retain or reproduce the exact words written. We do not pronounce decisively in favour of any one of these methods which have all been employed by preachers of the greatest excellence; but we imagine that the last method will be found the most generally applicable.

Splendid examples of all the methods may be found. Massillon, Bourdaloue, and Bossuet in his earlier stage, all three memorized. Chrysostom, Bossuet in his later years, and Lacordaire improvised, that is, prepared carefully, but did not write. Bishop Magee adopted the third method in earlier days, but now probably, for the most part improvises. We conclude for most preachers reading will be best; but for the ideal preacher, for the orator, reading is out of the question. But there are not many orators.

REVIEWS.

BISHOP CARPENTER'S BAMPTON LECTURES.*

This is, in many ways, a most remarkable book. In the first place, it contains, we imagine, the first series of Bampton Lectures that were ever preached before they were written. The Bishop informs us that, as they stand, they are the corrected reports taken at the time of their delivery, and this accounts for the delay in their publication, which takes place nearly two years after they were preached. We are bound to say that, even if this is hardly the ideal manner of producing a series of Bampton

Lectures, there is no trace of haste or carelessness in the discourses as they stand.

The subject is one of overwhelming interest and importance: Will religion endure? or is it one of those phases of human experience which "have their day and cease to be?" The question is of special interest at the present moment. "Times of transition," says the Lecturer, "are times of question and of doubt. Our age is such; and it is said that the age has lost its faith. The saying is uttered by some who fear that it is true; it is echoed by others who wish it to be true. But it is not true because prejudice and fear say so." This is excellent, and it gives the keynote of the book.

The Bishop finds arguments for the permanence of religion, not only in past history, but also in the permanence of man's nature, involving certain spiritual conditions or principles which may be called laws. These are first, the Law of Environment: "As we think, we are," secondly, the Law of Organism: "As we are, we see," thirdly, the Law of Sacrifice: "No pains, no gains," fourthly, the law of Indirectness: "A man cannot perfect himself in anything if he seek perfection directly." Each of these points is illustrated with great force. Under the first the author exposes the shallowness of despising positive doctrine. Under the second we are reminded of the dependence of moral vision upon character. Under the third, we are reminded that it is he who loses his life that truly saves it. But it is the enforcement of the fourth law that is the most striking, and, we think, the most original.

"Sacrifice," says his Lordship, "when it is sought as sacrifice, has a self-consciousness which mars its simplicity and spoils its moral force. When men preach self-sacrifice—self-sacrifice as the moral force which can regenerate mankind—they forget that self-forgetfulness is essential to perfect sacrifice. A sacrifice undertaken because sacrifice is noble, is alloyed with that self-regarding look which mars its beauty in the view of the soul itself. Sacrifice which knows itself as such, is not pure sacrifice. Something more is needed, some impulse of enthusiasm, some inspiration of love, to lift it out of self-regardfulness." We wish we could find space for the whole of this admirable passage.

In the next three lectures, he considers the permanent elements of religion which man's nature demands, namely, Dependence, Fellowship, and Progress. All three, he says, are suggested by general considerations, but the evidence that they are really required by mankind must be found in the history of religions. And this evidence he discovers in the three which he calls universal religions, Islamism, Buddhism, and Christianity, (Kuenen would demur to this) as well as in some of the minor religions. When he comes to consider how far the three great religions respond to this demand, he decides that in Islamism the element of Dependence is natural and indigenous, that of Fellowship of artificial growth, and that of Progress has no place. Buddhism, in some measure, recognizes all the three demands, although not all originally; whilst in Christianity all the three elements were originally present. We would remark that the analysis given of the author's remarks on Buddhism is very far from representing the contents of that portion of the lecture. Indeed the weak points of this system of quietism and nihilism are admirably exposed, although with a gentle and pitiful hand.

The fifth lecture on Religion and Morality is a very seasonable utterance, directed, to a great extent, against Mr. Cotter Morison's "Service of Man." Upon the results arrived at in this lecture he proceeds, in the sixth, to build up the argument for the "necessity of religion." In the last lecture, the "Religion of the Future," the author points out first the needful conditions, remarking that Religion must satisfy man's wish for unity and give guarantee of Permanence; further, that it must supply the three elements, Dependence, Fellowship, and Progress; finally that it must possess a Power of Inspiration, and he shows the relation of this power to the four Laws described in the first Lecture. It is apparent that Christianity alone does meet these requirements.

The Introduction to the Volume, which may be regarded as also supplementary, since it has been written at a time considerably removed from that

of the delivery of the lectures, gives a theory of the classification of religions, and also a number of definitions of religion which possess a double interest, since they not only tell us what a number of eminent men have thought on this subject, but they show us how profound is their agreement, even when they employ very different language; and even when they bring out differences, they show how these are accounted for by the different points of view. Schleiermacher's celebrated definition, "A sense of absolute dependence," holds a prominent place, and with right; but we rather wonder that the late Dean Mansel's addition is not noted, "and a sense of responsibility."

The lectures are not only eloquent and brilliant, as their author's reputation would lead us to expect, but they give abundant evidence of varied learning and of acute and powerful thought.

GOSPEL CHRONOLOGY.*

The Chronology of the earthly life of Jesus Christ is a subject of great interest and of no slight importance; and the book before us is an interesting contribution to its settlement. Unfortunately there are not many of us who are competent to estimate the astronomical arguments employed by the various writers. It is like the arguments about the great pyramid. They are most convincing until you hear the other side. So it is just possible that Mr. Page may be right in some of his conclusions, because we are not sure that we are qualified to judge; but in some others we hold he is certainly mistaken.

Thus it is possible that he is right in assigning the death of our Lord to A.D. 29, although we had thought that Caspari had pushed the date as far back as was possible, when, on astronomical grounds, he fixed on the year 30. We are certainly confirmed in our belief in the latter date by finding that Mr. Page finds it necessary to assign the death of our Lord to Thursday instead of Friday. We are quite aware that he has Dr. Westcott on his side; but it is hardly possible that the Church should be in error in a matter of this kind; and the supposed difficulty about the three days is no greater now than it was at the beginning.

When the author places the birth of our Lord at 3 B.C., he cannot be far wrong, as it was almost certainly either three or four years before the beginning of the present era; but we hold that his conclusion is entirely untenable, when he professes to have shown that the active ministry of Jesus lasted "but a single year." This inference results from the author's other calculations, and might be set right by bringing the date of the crucifixion down by one year.

The duration of our Lord's public ministry has been always a matter of dispute and doubt; but we are not aware that any one has seriously abridged it to the limit of a year. There was a Passover at the beginning and the end of His ministry; but there was also one during its course, near the time of the miraculous feeding of the multitudes. It is from S. John that we learn this circumstance; but, apart from S. John's Gospel, we have hardly any indications of time in the life of our Lord. According to the earlier belief there were four Passovers, the other being the unnamed feast in S. John v. 1. If this were the Feast of the Passover, then the ministry of Christ must have lasted over three years. But it is now generally decided that it was not, although the greatest diversity of opinion prevails as to the nature of the Feast. The long entertained view of its being the Feast of Purim is now generally discredited.

With respect to the second part of the book, which is described as the "Four Gospels harmonized," we must explain that it is not a Harmony of the Gospels in the ordinary sense of the word. It is, in fact, a continuous narrative of the Life of Christ in which all the four Gospels are so interwoven that the whole of their contents are given in one narration. This work has evident advantages and disadvantages, and has already been well done. We regret that Mr. Page did not adopt either the Authorized or Revised Version.

We entirely agree with the remark in the Intro-

*New Lights from Old Eclipses, or Chronology Corrected and the four Gospels Harmonized, by the rectification of errors in the received Astronomical Tables. By William M. Page, \$2.50. St. Louis: C. R. Barns, 1890.

[*The Permanent Elements of Religion: Bampton Lectures for 1887. By W. Boyd Carpenter, D.D., D.C.L., Bishop of Ripon. \$2.00. Macmillan & Co., London and New York.