

dreadful to perform merely as the master of some profession! Dr. Guthrie says, "When a man goes through the office as a mere official, the pulpit is filled with the ghastly form of a skeleton, its cold and bony fingers bearing a burning lamp."—Yes, a skeleton may bear a torch, but it cannot inflate a trumpet with the breath of life; life is needed to rouse by the thrilling tone the pulsations of life in others; they make preachers of power usually who inflate the trumpet by their own experience. Again and again we have to remark it, that they are usually most successful, most honoured in conversions. They give full proofs of their ministry who speak from the knowledge of their own. The anecdote of the sailor has often been quoted, who, passing over one of our London bridges, saw a number of birds in a cage, and asked their price, and paid for them, and set them all at liberty; and when, as they flew away, it seemed strange, he said, "I know what it is to be bound, and to be free; I could not bear to see them in that cage." Can you interpret the bondage of the world by your recollection of your own bondage? Can you remember the morning of your freedom? "Blessed are they *that know* the joyful sound."—REV. E. PAXTON HOOD.

LAY PREACHING.

"A hundred times it has been said," observes Isaac Taylor, in his work "Wesley and Methodism," "by those who would fain show their liberality in getting up an apology for lay-preaching, that it is the lay-preacher's employment of a dialect colloquially understood by the mass of the people, and at the same time the low level of his ideas, that fit him for his office as their instructor. . . . But no; it is *concentration*, and not a low familiarity,—it is the elementary grandeur of first truths, that forcefully opens up a way into the human heart, whether cultured or rude. Whether it be the bearer and winner of academic honours, or the recently-washed mason or shoemaker:—the preacher who feels with power and *freshness* such truths, and who brings to bear upon the utterance of them some natural gifts is always listened to by the *mass of men*."

The "first-truths" uttered by Alexander Paterson were drawn fresh from the Word: in his mouth they never grew commonplace; homely as was the missionary's style, the truths retained their elementary grandeur: they touched the heart, they pierced the conscience, they held the sinner fast as a rebel of God, they drew him by the cords of love to the feet of the Sin-bearer.

And how did he maintain in his own soul the power and freshness of those first-truths? In his ploughman-days, he had always been accustomed to rise at three o'clock in the morning. After he came to Edinburgh, and down to the close of his life, he awoke regularly at the same hour, and gave himself to meditation and prayer. It was in these morning hours of Bible meditation and prayer, that the real battle with the enemy of souls was fought. In his closet, he was Moses on the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand: in the closes and wynde, he was Joshua discomfiting Amalek in the plain.—*Memoirs of Alex. Paterson.*

CHRISTIAN MARTYRS.

The martyrs! They are the glory of Lebanon, they are the excellency of our Carmel and Sharon, the most fragrant flowers in our garden, the passion-flowers on our church walls, the most fruitful trees in our orchards, the most majestic trees in our forests, as the rose and the apple tree, and the palm tree and the cedar. Our martyr's graves! They are the upper foundations of the temple of truth. That structure, so large in its dimensions, so noble in its proportions, so divine in design, has for its first and lowest foundation the rock in which we find the sepulchre of Christ; but for its upper and proximate foundation it has every martyr's grave. To drop the figure—well did the Greek call those who shed their blood for Christ, martyrs; they are witnesses, whose voice is unmistakably distinct; whose tones are supremely rich, whose faces shine as angels, whose form is like the Son of God; witnesses whose silver trumpet-voice penetrates us, and whose diapason utterance subdues us; witnesses whose presence is like the oak to the parasite; witnesses in whose courage we become strong.