

STYLE OF PREACHING.

"Concerning the preaching in the United States I had small opportunity of judging. Care was taken that my business was to preach myself, and that little space should be allowed me for listening to others. Englishmen know something of the sermons of Henry Ward Beecher, and something of the discourses of Dr. Bushnell. But neither of these gifted men can be taken as specimens of American preaching generally. The free, discursive, popular eloquence of Beecher, and the refined philosophical thoughts of Bushnell, are alike remote from the kind of preaching which may be said to be characteristic of the American pulpit. The Methodists, to the credit of their good sense, discountenance reading sermons. It is not known among them, and they have their reward. I was sorry to learn that the reverse was the custom in most of the other denominations, and I have reason to think that the common manner of reading lacks the force and fire necessary to make reading effective on the popular mind. An old Scotchwoman was one day praising Dr. Chalmers very highly on her way home from church, when a divine who heard her said, 'I wonder at you, mother, in talking so; the man read it all, and you know what you have said against reading sermons.' 'Aye,' was the reply of the good dame, '*but such reading as you!*' Yes—there is a secret, and a secret which only a few of those who read sermons ever come to know. Some men can be more efficient as public instructors by reading than otherwise. But such men should be exceptional. It is not necessary that they should be the rule. It is expected in New England, as I heard, that sermons should be short. I thought the expectation a bad sign. When sermons are good—good not only in what they contain, but in the spirit of freedom and freshness with which the preacher delivers himself—we do not find the people often expressing the wish that their minister would 'use shortness.' There are sermons that are too long, be they short as they may. From all that I could learn, my conclusion is, that in American preaching, taken generally, there is a good measure of intelligence, the enunciation of sound doctrine, and of right principles, with a grave sort of earnestness, but that it is sadly wanting in emotion, embracing little of the persuasive. In this deficiency we, perhaps, see an effect of climate. But why should *secular* oratory in America be impassioned, and religious oratory so much wanting in that element?

EPISCOPALIANISM IN AMERICA.

"It may seem strange that the Episcopal Church, keeping to the model of the Church of England, should be highly influential in America. To find the elements of harmony between Church-of-Englandism and Republicanism may be difficult. But the fact is, the Americans who have become Episcopalians, if they have not ceased to be Republicans, consist mostly of persons who see much in the Republicanism before them that is not to their taste. It is often said that the higher and more cultured class of men in the United States never touch politics, which really means that they cannot be said to be really Republicans. For the same reason the same parties seek a place apart from the ecclesiastical bodies whose polity is of the more democratic cast. Such persons are shocked by vulgar insolence at the hustings, or through the press, still more if presenting itself within the pale of a church. They will face none of it anywhere if they can avoid it. In the Episcopal Church there is a settled service, leaving little to the good or bad taste in the minister, and a moderated popular influence, giving security against annoyance from that quarter. The vulgar is precluded—everything is graceful and orderly. This form of religion, moreover, is known to be that of the Queen of England and her Court, and of the rank and wealth of England for the most part; and, let some Americans rebel against it as they may, the opinion and taste of England have potent influence in the United States. Of course, it should be admitted that a man may be an Episcopalian Church-of-England man from higher considerations than these; but the lower considerations, I imagine, do much more than the higher to make men Episcopalians in America.

"The discipline of a Congregational church should be such as to secure its spiritual character; but the most fitting mode of securing that end in one set of