

to remain kneeling for three or four hours, and that penitents only knelt at the moment when absolution was given. "What!" she exclaimed in astonishment, "Does it take two or three hours to tell your confessor you have neither been willing nor able to sin during a few days of cloistered life! What, then, are poor worldlings to do, who are much more exposed to temptation than you are? Are labourers to desert the fields, and shopkeepers to close their shops, in order to spend half a-day on their knees in a confessional?"—*Dickens's "All the Year Round."*

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### A LAWYER ON PREACHING.

I have been a listener to sermons for fifty years, and either I have changed or there has been a great change for the worse in the delivery of the Gospel mes- sage. There is less earnestness, less directness, less logical power, and less study than there was thirty years ago; and as a necessary consequence, the general style has become diffuse, if not superficial, and the result less efficient. If I am right in this, we have an important fact to be dealt with, and it ought to be removed, greatly modified, and that immediately.

What is the remedy? Let the ministers of the gospel review their past history and return, as soon as it is possible, to the good old paths of their fathers, and preach the Bible in all its simplicity and grandeur.

No pulpit orator can hope to orator much into his audience unless he follows his text closely, and he must advance nothing that does not tend directly to illustrate his main proposition; and, when his argument is finished, he should not spend half an hour, more or less, in restating his propositions.

Many ministers deliver finely written and even classical sermons, on very solemn subjects, but they are essays merely; and their effect is to lower the standard of Christian character and the dignity and glory of the ministry.

Let no one think I am disparaging the ministers of salvation; far from it. During the time I have mentioned, the Bar has also greatly changed. The eloquence and much of its glory has passed away, but the Bar has, in change, become eminently practical and business-like; its success is much greater than it ever was in the higher courts. In fact, the Bar has become the theatre of pure intellectual power.—*N. Y. Observer.*

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### THE LATE REV. JOHN ANGELL JAMES, OF BIRMINGHAM.

The Rev. Dr. Miller, Rector of Birmingham, thus writes of the late Rev. John Angell James:—He had no academic distinction; he was pre-eminently a man of self-culture. Few points in his character were more instructive than this. Had he been an idler he would have lived and died comparatively useless. He was not a genius—not a man of the highest order of intellect—not a profound reasoner—not a poet with luxurious fancy; but to the utmost he cultivated his natural powers, and became a preacher largely blessed of God to the salvation of men, a prolific and widely-read writer, and a first-rate public speaker. He was greater as a public speaker than as a preacher or a writer. His life was a lesson to young men to snatch the moments of leisure and turn them to account. Further on in the lecture it is stated that John Angell James, did not burn "midnight oil" or get up at dawn to work or study; but, by being careful of the ordinary hours of the day, he got through an astonishing amount of work. His jubilee at Birmingham, after he had worked as minister of Carr's-lane Chapel for 50 years, is referred to, and then it is said that two of the most exemplary excellences of his character were his catholicity and his charity. He was a thorough-going Dissenter; but for a great part of his life he sought the fellowship of congenial minds amongst the clergy of the Establishment, who he himself said, were his true brethren. Dr. Miller then expresses his conviction that John Angell James, though no episcopal hands were laid on him, had a call from God to the ministry, and that he belonged to no sect, but to the universal Church of Christ; and, in