

FAMOUS PREACHERS.

THE ELOQUENCE OF CHRYSOSTOM.

The following description of the eloquence of Chrysostom at Antioch is given in the "Leaders of our Church Universal:"

His first sermons produced a marvellous effect. People said such convincing preaching had never before been heard. Notwithstanding his repeated requests that they would leave off their pagan practices, he was once and again interrupted in his burning eloquence by loud and stormy manifestations of approval. And indeed his rhetoric, with all the enlightenment shed on it by the Gospel, had in it a strong flavour of Greek culture and an Attic elegance, reminding one of the eloquence of a Demosthenes, rather than the simple form of speech of the apostles and evangelists.

But the chief power of his sermons lay not in choice of language, nor turning of sentences, nor originality of simile and metaphor, but in their fulness of thought and striking argument, in their noble spontaneity, as of classic days, in their adaptation, and in the fresh, buoyant, nervous style of delivery—like a stream that has burst through its rocky barrier, gushing forth from the very depths of his heart. "I speak," he says of himself, "as the fountains bubble, and still continue to bubble, though none will come to draw. I preach as the rivers flow—the same, though no one drink of their flood of waters." . . . In his sermons he exposed with great fearlessness the moral sores he had found alike in high and low in the luxurious capital. He characterized the positive dogmatic tone affected by so many, as a mask behind which a child of hell might be concealed. He lashed, without sparing, the avarice of the rich, the extravagance in dress of the women, and the eager running of everybody to the theatre and circus—"those devil-kitchens of paganism." He insisted upon a spiritual frame of mind and its preservation in every relation. As in Antioch, here again, when uttering the most vital truths, he was frequently interrupted, to his sore pain, by the stentorian applause of the crowded congregation. "Friends," he cried out to the excited multitude, "what am I to do with your applause? It is the salvation of your souls I want. God is my witness what tears I have shed in my secret chamber that so many of you are still in your sins. Anxiety for your saving has almost made me forget to care for my own." His tears and prayers won a rich harvest of souls. Multitudes were by the word of fire from his tongue led to God. By degrees the city put on a different aspect. In him, it was said, the fable of Orpheus was verified—by the melody of his speech wolves and tigers were subdued and changed to gentle lambs.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

This man, who now saunters up to join the assembly, is of a very different type from the gentlemen of the court. His brow is knit; at intervals he murmurs some word to himself as if he wished not to forget it; something very like a proof-sheet is peeping out of his pocket. People stare at him, half with curiosity, half with wonder, as though they were surprised to see him here. David Hume has, in truth, not much time to spare from his history, but he cannot deny himself such an intellectual treat as listening to Whitefield. In and out among the well dressed many, there moves a crowd of people who wear neither silk nor velvet. There is the artisan, with his wife and children, who have come out here chiefly for the sake of the fresh, sweet country air; there are the city clerk and his sweetheart doing a little flirting to while away the time; there is the poor needle-woman, whose pale face has such a wistful look, that we fancy her heart must be beginning dimly to guess that if she could grasp the meaning of the great preacher's words, it might possibly bring into her life even more warmth and colouring than there is in the dresses she stitches for the grand ladies. Suddenly the murmur of voices which has been running through the vast assembly is hushed. The duchesses and countesses incline their heads a quarter of an inch forward; the fans of the actresses cease to flutter; the mass of the people make a little rush all in the same direction. Every

eye is fixed on a man who is ascending slowly a green bank near at hand. At first sight there is nothing very remarkable in his appearance. His figure is tall and spare, his dress is homely; when he turns towards the audience we see that he squints, and he has no especial beauty of feature. But the moment he begins to speak, his face is forgotten in his voice. How does it thrill with holy passion as he tells of his dear Lord; how does it ring with stern indignation against sin, and yet how does it melt with tenderness over the sinner! It is so clear, that it is heard at the further end of the wide assembly; and yet so sweet, that music is the only word that can give an idea of its tones. His face too, and his figure have changed since we last looked at him. Meaning has come into every movement of his hand; each feature answers to the theme upon his lips, as does the lake to the lights and shadows in the sky above; his form seems to have grown majestic, and to be like that of the desert preacher, or of him who cried against Nineveh. When he speaks of heaven, we almost believe he has been there; when he tells of the Saviour's love and sufferings, it seems to us that he must have walked with Peter and John at His side; when he tells a story by way of illustration, as he often does, the description is so vivid that we listen breathlessly as though we really saw the scene he paints, with our bodily eyes. For two hours the tide of eloquence flows on unceasingly, and still the listening crowd remains enthralled. Different signs of emotion appear among them. The daughters of the people stand with clasped hands, looking up at the preacher as though he were an angel bringing them the good tidings which are the especial birthright of the toil-worn and weary; the actresses sob and faint; the great ladies actually sit upright to listen. The sterner sex, too, are affected in their own way. The hard faces of the mechanics work with unwonted feeling; the brow of Hume grows smooth; even Chesterfield, who hitherto has stood like a statue of one of his own ancestors, so far forgets himself when the preacher in a lively parable is describing a blind beggar on the edge of a precipice, as to start forward and murmur, "O save him, save him." No wonder they are thus moved, for the preacher himself sets the example. Sometimes his voice trembles so much in his intense earnestness, that he hardly can go on; sometimes he even weeps. At length the sermon ends in a grand wave of heaven-aspiring prayer; then the crowd disperses, some to spend the night at a masquerade or at the gaming-table, some to criticise, some to forget, some to keep the good seed silently in their hearts.—*Sunday Magazine*.

DR. CHALMERS.

Those who never heard Chalmers never knew what true eloquence is—eloquence alike of speech and of the thing spoken—nor felt the mastery of it all their lives. I am sometimes conscious of a sort of pity for my younger brethren in the ministry, when I am reminded that, being "of yesterday," they really "know nothing" about it. They never can. Its effect was perfectly unique. We can all understand what it is to be impressed, riveted, charmed, even melted; and many of us can associate such pleasurable sensation with the preaching of such noble pulpit orators as were Andrew Thompson, Robert Gordon, James Buchanan, Robert Candlish, Thomas Guthrie, and not a few more—alas! no longer with us—without going beyond our own borders; but it was Chalmers alone who electrified, galvanized us. The difficulty in listening to him, was to remain seated or silent. Sometimes the whole congregation started from their seats under the dynamic power of his appeals. One felt inclined to shout, yet afraid to breathe, far more afraid to cough, for fear of losing a word. It is scarcely conceivable that Demosthenes could be a match for him. The quiet beauty of his "shining" was equal to its brilliancy. His life was as eloquent as were his lips. He was one of the most lovable of men. All good men loved him, and there was nobody of whom I ever heard, who hated or even disliked him. His students all but worshipped him. So catholic was he, that he was esteemed by Christians of every other denomination almost as much as by those of his own.

Edward Bickersteth, John Angell James, and he were the triumviri of the "Evangelical Alliance" at its formation. Dr. John Brown, of Edinburgh, designated him as "The Apostle of Clarity." Though unquestionably of homely, if not somewhat uncouth exterior, his countenance was so beaming, "his eye, though turned on empty space, beamed so keen" with what was even more and better than "humour," that Tholuck, the great German theologian, spoke of him as "a beautiful old man." This man was "full of good works and alms-deeds which he did." He was not a meteor or a comet, but a star.—*Dr. Burns, in Free Church Assembly*.

MAN-ISH BOYS.

We must coin a word to designate these nondescripts. When the English language was young they had no existence, or, at least, like fossils, were not sufficiently numerous to call for classification. This is our apology for our vocabulary, and our effort to enrich it. But names are only shadows of things. Grottesque objects cannot have genteel titles. Man-ish boys are not a fiction—would that they were!—but a most disagreeable fact.

The average boy, as God makes him, is about nine inches long. The rest of his length he grows. Providence may by sunshine stimulate, or by wrestling winds disfigure the stalk and stem of the sapling, but is not responsible in any moral way for the gnarled and gaunt trees of the forest. And human life does not differ greatly in the conditions of growth from plant development. There are freaks of nature in the family as well as in the field. We do not now speak of those sad physical malformations which are God's messengers to teach sympathy and all the passive virtues in the home and the world. These are parts and illustrations of that mystery of iniquity which no philosopher can solve, and by reason of which the whole creation groans. But moral partiality or positive evil may take upon itself the fairest form. The devil never loses his horns and hoofs, but he sometimes wears domino and buskin. Masquerade is his favourite mode in good society. Let men say what they choose, some depth of deformity is to be found in the youngest life. Let it be granted that the monad of one day is pure, but the monad becomes the monarch of the nursery, and before one year has passed will be found to demonstrate a naughtiness which grows with his growth and strengthens with his strength. This may all be the infection of family life but it is none the less a fact, as any parent knows to his sorrow. The unchildlike child is a monstrosity by development and not of divine creation.

Man-ishness manifests itself at different years and in different ways among differing nations. In England the child is kept in leading strings until tall enough to look over his mother's head. One of the farces on a London street is the overgrown boy dressed in roundabouts and decorated with the traditional tall hat. His manners are immature, but he is more wise concerning the evil than he appears to be. Some years since, we sat in a London restaurant very near two such young gentlemen. They talked so loudly that the deafest neighbour must have heard them. Every reference to their father identified him as "my governor." And "the old woman" seemed to be the pet name for the loving mother, who had by her tenderness deserved a better designation. Their special interest seemed to be the "bobs" and the "cobs" which they had been able to "squeeze" out of their parents for purposes of pleasure. They had the absurd folly dominating their words and actions that the rougher and coarser they could appear the nearer they approached real manliness. These same youths at home, or others of like look whom I have seen in family circles, could be as childlike and bland as "the heathen Chinee." The fiction of innocence was kept up to the standard of English domestic life, but when, out of their parents' sight their ways became both devious and dark. That this international plague of "man-ish boys" is spreading its infection through English society is plain to the critical observer, and proved, notwithstanding all caveats, by the large number of sons of English gentlemen who are to be found