

SERMONIZING.

The great business of the preacher is to preach. Preaching is only a means, and not an end. But as the results are always with God, using the means is the highest work of the agent. Sermonizing should fill the thought of the preacher. Other means demand some consideration. He must visit the sick, comfort the afflicted, exercise his pastoral prerogatives from door to door. As a soul-seeker, he must use all the agencies that reach souls. But as God has appointed preaching—even the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe—and has called men to preach the word, the preacher must put the infinite emphasis of an agonizing and tireless industry upon the work of making sermons, of preaching. It is impossible to give any rule or order of doing this work that will not find about as many exceptions as illustrations in its application to the great multitude of average men. A rule that would suit as many as all the other rules combined might merit consideration. In yielding to repeated requests to discuss this theme, we only hope to make some suggestions that may help our younger brothers who have the zeal or ambition to earnestly desire the best gifts, and to become workmen that need not be ashamed.

Making a sermon is like reaping a harvest; it must be preceded by a seed-time, and by certain favoring conditions. A full brain and a full heart are essentials to the production of a full sermon. Study and prayer will secure these conditions. If you cannot or will not do both these, go back to some honest industry, and save the churches the necessity of petitioning the Bishops not to send you to them.

1. It is a good habit to keep a convenient note-book, in which you will enter the texts or subjects that seem to offer an instructive lesson for your people. Have this always with you. As you read, or study, or visit from house to house, or hear the testimonies of your members, either in their homes or in prayer-meetings, or walk the streets, or drive or ride, keep your mind open and on the alert for something or anything that will help to feed your flock. Whenever any thing—theme, or text, or illustration—occurs to you, put it down in your note-book in such a classification that you can find it again. It will not be difficult to make this list several times as long as you can use. But that becomes your wealth. You have a wider range for a choice.

At the earliest moment select a subject for your sermon. This means, as soon as you have disposed of the subject last prepared. Take your list on Sunday night or Monday morning, and after earnest and believing prayer, for that wisdom which is promised, select the text or theme.

3. When this is done, and you feel a warming up toward the subject, and have some degree of assurance that you have been directed to the right theme for the occasion, then stick to it, never change—a moderately good subject handled with persistent and sustained vigor will do better than a better subject held and handled by a vacillating purpose and doubting conviction.

4. Ask yourself what you wish to do. Have a definite object in view, some argument you wish to project, some truth you wish to impress, or some conviction you wish to produce. Random shooting only frightens the game. Take aim.

5. Prepare a sketch or outline of your sermon. This means much hard-thinking. Find out which end of your subject naturally comes first, and what point will be best for the last. It is often a good plan to put down, as they occur to you, any and all thoughts that come to you on the theme. When this is done exhaustively, then devote your strength to arranging them, by first numbering the leading thoughts in proper order and the other ideas under their appropriate headings.

This sketch-preparing involves very much of work and care. The text must be carefully studied. If possible, translate it for yourself from the original. Sometimes a richer meaning is felt than can be carried over into a translation. If you are discussing a doctrine, or harmonizing Scripture teaching concerning a truth or an event, it is of

great service to collect all the parallel and closely-related passages, and have them under your eye. In a difficult exposition or harmony it is wise to memorize all the passages involved. Holding them in solution as it were in your mind, and asking for light, you are quite likely to crystallize these passages into some clear and satisfactory form in which the truth will be most conspicuous.

6. With the subject thus sketched, brood over each leading proposition till you have measured your utmost ability in penetrating its depths. This should profitably occupy, at least, several consecutive hours on each proposition.

7. Next turn to all the helps in your reach, not to skeleton books and such helps, but to every able discussion of the points involved in your plan. Read every thing worth reading on the subject. You have done your best; now feed your mind and appropriate whatever you can digest from your reading and study. This will often cause a modification of your plan or a filling out of the sketch as arranged before. Do not steal; digest. At a feast to which you are invited you do not put chickens or game in your pocket, but you eat all you desire. Master what you read on your subject, and use the strength acquired.

The work up to this point, where you can be justly said to have a sketch of your sermon, ought to have received not less than eight days of solid work. A day should embrace about six hours in the fore part of the day, and about four in the evening when you have no meeting, and two when you have. But keep your body at the top of its condition.

8. Write. Let each sentence be written, and condensed, and perfected. When you feel that it cannot be put into any smaller space and clearly present the idea, put it down as a sentence in your sermon. Follow this rule to the end. Search the entire field of your knowledge for illustrations and figures that will enable you to condense and enforce your idea. Your sermon should be rich in information like a good lecture, but this wealth of instruction should not obscure the spiritual effect. It should illustrate and help to unfold your theme. When your sermon has been prepared with this care it will be a just measure of your strength, and may be counted as so much capital.

9. Prepare from this manuscript a synopsis of your arguments and ideas in proper order.

10. Carefully and perfectly memorize this synopsis.

11. Familiarize yourself with your manuscript, so that every idea is at your command.

12. With utter oblivion of self, and the results upon your reputation, use this preparation to reach the end you have in view, namely, the production of a certain conviction in the best way possible. Present it as you would plead for the life of your brother.

P. S.—This course pursued by the average man for ten years will open to him every pulpit in the land, and vastly increase the pulpit ability of our ministry. Ordinary ability with extraordinary fidelity holds the key of the future. Brother, knock, and it shall be opened unto you.—*New York Advocate.*

BENEFIT OF BEING KNOCKED ABOUT.

It is a good thing for a young man to be "knocked about in the world," although his soft-hearted parents may not think so. All youths, or if not all, certainly nineteen-twentieths of the sum total, enter life with a surplussage of self-conceit. The sooner they are relieved the better. If, in measuring themselves with wiser and older men than themselves, they discover that it is unwarranted, and get rid of it gracefully and of their own accord, well and good; if not, it is desirable, for their own sake, that it should be knocked out of them. A boy who is sent to a large school soon finds his level. His will may have been paramount at home; but school-boys are democratic in their ideas, and if arrogant, he is sure to be thrashed into a recognition of the golden rule. The world is a great public school, and it soon teaches a new pupil

his proper place. If he has the attributes that belong to a leader, he will be installed into the position of the leader; if not, whatever his own opinion of his abilities, he will be compelled to fall back into the rank and file. If not destined to greatness the next best thing to which he can aspire is respectability; but no man can be truly great or truly respectable who is vain, pompous, and overbearing. By the time the novice has found his legitimate social position, be the same high or low, the probability is the same disagreeable traits of character will be softened down and worn away. Most likely the process of abrasion will be rough, but when it is all over, and he begins to see himself as others see him, and not as reflected in the mirror of self-conceit, he will be thankful that he has run the gauntlet, and arrived through by a rough road of knowledge. Upon the whole, whatever loving mothers may think to the contrary, it is a good thing for youths to be knocked about in the world. It makes men of them, and fits them for the rough and tumble life they will have to endure in this world.

MONGRELS

BY J. M. H.

It is really refreshing to meet a pure-bred Methodist, who believes with all his heart in all the doctrines and usages of the Methodist Church, and is not the least ashamed of his faith. The pure-bred believes in blood redemption, the resurrection of the body, eternal death, as well as eternal life, the judgment, instantaneous justification and sanctification by faith, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and revivals of religion in answer to prayer, resulting from the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, who is God, and not from magnetism, affinity, electricity, or the exercise of the emotional nature. He also believes in going to the altar to seek religion, and sees nothing in that, or shouting either, to "shock the sensibilities of a refined mind." He feels it his duty, yes, his duty, to go to class, pray in public, and seek the salvation of souls every day; and so he lives in his old-fashioned way for the glory of God, and makes the world better by being in it.

But there are mongrels among Methodists as well as among ducks, and though we prefer a mongrel duck to a pure-bred, we cannot feel the same toward the mongrel Methodist. He is a Presbytero-Episcopo-Universalo Scientifico-Spiritualistico-Methodist mongrel, who believes a great deal of everything and nothing in particular, and while he is a Methodist, he wants to be broad and take into his creed and practice everything but Methodism. The mongrel is sometimes found in the pulpit. His sermons are wonderful, perfectly wonderful. New sermons, full of new discoveries, and possibly he will throw in, now and then, just by way of variety, you know, a new doctrine.

The mongrel of the pew regards going to the altar improper, as it is making a display of yourself, and if under a red-hot Gospel sermon mourners come forward, he doesn't know what to do with them; he feels as awkward as an old bachelor handling a young baby. The revival will come in in its own time in a quiet way, and persons will be intelligently converted, and nobody hurt. The class is out of his creed altogether, and mentioned only as a thing of the past, while the pulpit should do all the public praying as well as preaching, and the pew should be edified, beautifully, eloquently edified. Responding Amen to the sermon is rather strange, and shouting out of the question. He is a Methodist in name, and thinks he is at heart, and in all things, but he is only a mongrel. We would not have any man pin his faith down to a form or an exercise, without exercising his intelligence and best judgment in his religion; but if he is a Methodist we would have him a pure-bred, whole-souled Methodist, in the full exercise of all his spiritual and mental powers, a Methodist with all his heart, with all his mind, and with all his might. If a man drifts away from Methodist doctrine and from Methodist usage, he should drift away from the Methodist Church, and not try to adul-

terate it by his new notions or ways, which can do him no good, and certainly do it harm.

We have not written the above with an eye upon any individual or upon any particular congregation, but looking upon the general church everywhere, we see that the Methodist Church can not live without Methodism, and that real, spiritual, glorious, old-fashioned Methodism, is not in blossom and beauty as it used to be. There is too much sermon and not enough class. Too much church and not enough closet. Too much show and not enough shout. If we can not be Methodists, let us go where we can be something definite and know ourselves, and be known of men as representatives of some great truths and practices. But if we love the old ways still, and want to be Methodist in all that word means, let us stop criticizing our own church, know what we really believe, find out what Methodism is by studying history and the Bible, get the fullness of the blessing of peace, the sanctification of the soul, and blaze for the glory of God in the practice and spread of Methodism.—*Methodist Protestant.*

JUSTIN D. FULTON, D. D., of Brooklyn, the distinguished Baptist, delivered two or three lectures recently in Pittsburgh. We heard the most of one lecture, "Edwin M. Stanton," and were edified by its facts and entertained by passages here and there, of incident, but, as a literary performance, we should pronounce the effort commonplace. The speaker uses a harsh head-tone, for the most part, although some of his lower tones and more subdued sentences were quite pleasant to the ear. The lecture itself was patchy and confused. If the lecturer would rearrange his material, condense his words, and use his natural tones of voice, he would do well to repeat "Edwin M. Stanton."

Some of his phrases are decidedly sensational, such as "arm and arm with Jehovah," "swearing as a military necessity," and other ejaculatory expressions thrust into the subject with studied intent to astonish the audience. Furthermore: "We should say that a public speaker who insists upon saying eye-ther and ay-ther, for either and neither, (although New England does allow it,) and yet indulges in such sentences as "Edwin M. Stanton carved a way along the ages for you and I," does not give evidence of scholarship sufficient to entertain ordinary hearers even in the smoke of Pittsburgh. It would be as well to avoid affectation in orthoepy and look a little after the syntax.

Dr. Fulton's position on the rights of women, as indicated in his book "Woman, as God Made Her," is a sorry one for a minister of Christ in this latter day. He is intolerant, egotistic, and fallacious. It is questionable whether men whose opinions are a thousand years behind the age can speak to the benefit of the public generally.—*Pittsburg Ad.*

The summer has not been allowed to pass without the customary debate in the West between a Campbellite and a Southern Methodist. The topic is, of course, baptism. Doctor Ditzler is the great Methodist champion.—*N. Y. Ind.* But isn't winter the time to attack "immersion, the only mode?" Ice is an argumentum ad hominem.

SCIENTIFIC.

BRIDGETOWN, Dec. 10, 1877.

EDITOR WESLEYAN,—

Dear Sir: Judging that you do not deem "informing the judgment" inconsistent with the character of a religious journal, I take the liberty of referring to you certain problems too deep for the ordinary intellect of this quarter of the vineyard, nothing doubting but that our old weekly visitor can gratify our longings.

First.—Does the Bay of Fundy not only rise above but also fall below ordinary sea level?

Secondly.—Assuming that the current theory of the general tides be correct, why does not the moon attract to her the ocean from North and South as well as that from East and West, and thus cause a continued low tide at the poles and far from them?

Yours respectfully,
G. P.

(Politely consigned to any of the scientific students among our readers, who have theories on these subjects.—EDITOR.)

BAI DU VIN CIRCUIT.

This Circuit is now entering upon its third year. Two years ago, a Methodist minister was looked upon by the people of this place, as we may imagine the Jews looked upon the Roman army. Matt. 24, 15. But, thanks be to God, it is not so now; the people are beginning to appreciate the services of the Methodist ministers.

Our missionary meetings have been held with good success. Nov. 12th, in the afternoon, the Rev. Mr. McKown, Chairman of the District, in company with the writer, left the parsonage, Chatham, for Bai du Vin. But owing to the roughness of the roads, it was late in the evening when we reached Mr. Robinsons, where we were met and cheered by a bright fire and a well spread table. Thursday we drove to Scruminac, where the good people of that place had built us a comfortable little church, which was opened on the afternoon of the same day, by the Chairman. He preached a very able sermon from Matt. 22, 42, "What think you of Christ, whose Son is he." In the evening we held our missionary meeting. When the time arrived to open, two of the deputation, "Revs. Jenkins and Shrewsbury, had not arrived. We had only just opened when our much esteemed friend, Capt. Taif, from Chatham, came in, bringing with him Bro. Jenkins, who immediately took the platform and gave a lively and interesting speech on the spirit of Missions. He was followed by the Chairman, who gave a lengthy and instructive speech on the progress of Methodism in the Mother Land and the United States, and then spoke of this Dominion of ours which God has given us to win for Christ. Wednesday evening we held our meeting at the Village. Here the speakers brought the subject of missions home to the people. At the close of the meeting we held a short prayer meeting, when fourteen stood up asking an interest in our prayers. On Thursday the Chairman had to return home, leaving Brother Jenkins and the writer to hold a meeting at Point du Car, which we did, thus ending the first missionary meetings on this Circuit.

On my return I commenced holding special services at the Village. At these meetings the power of God is manifested in convincing of sin. The work is His, and to Him be all the praise.

W. B. THOMAS.

MISSIONARY MEETING.

DEAR EDITOR.—On Sunday morning last, we held our missionary meeting, in the old church in Carleton. It was quite an innovation, on the time-honoured custom of meeting on some evening during the week, but the Lord of the Sabbath, made the season, one of the richest in spiritual blessings, the friends here ever experienced. The order of meeting was as follows: Rev. G. M. Barratt, Supernumerary, led in prayer, and after singing of invocation by the choir, he read the 35th chapter of Isaiah. Report was read by myself, which occupied the space of five minutes; the brevity observed in this case, was appreciated by every one present. Then the deputation, Rev. Bro. Young, having a full hour and more before him, opened out to us, in simple yet chaste, and beautiful language, the wonderful works of God, and as he related the story of mission life, in the great Northwest, and the power of Divine grace, in subduing the heart of the red-man of the forest, even to the full forgiveness of a murderer, every heart present gave its full assent to the fact, that Christian missions are not a failure; but the Divine method, of subjugating the world to Christ. Bro. Young won every heart, and it seemed as though every eye, was moistened "by the dew of the morning," as the mind gazed on Jesus as the perfection of beauty, and the throb of holy sympathy passed through the soul. The collection was more than double what it ever was here. Bro. John A. Clark, A. M., closed with the Benediction, and Bro. Young passed away from our midst, with "God bless him" from every lip. S. A. Carleton, St. John, Dec. 10, 1877.

OBITUARY.

MRS. ELLEN JANE CRAWFORD.

Of Mount Pleasant, on the Apohaqui circuit, who died on the 9th of November, in the 43rd year of her age, was for many years a consistent member of the Methodist Church. She found the religion which she professed in health to sustain her during her protracted affliction. Once as her end drew near she was enabled to say, "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain." And thus resting her spirit into his hands who is the resurrection and the life. In the presence of a large congregation we committed her body to the grave, from which we retired deeply impressed with the thought this is not our rest.