

lies between, are illustrative materials at the command of the preacher.

No other illustrations are so impressive—I might almost say so authoritative, as these, when treating of Christian experience. An eloquent Boston preacher once illustrated by the example of Abraham the needless fears and awkward endeavors of those whose faith grows weak by the Lord's delay to fulfill his promise. The man of faith had waited for the promised heir, till nature seemed to speak to aged Abraham and enfeebled Sarah and say "God is in a dilemma." So Abraham took Hagar to help the Lord out; but he only got him an outcast son and not an heir. The heir came in God's time. Those who listened will not forget the reproof which came more from their own hearts than the preacher's lips.

These Biblical lights are fresh, pleasing, penetrating. They are countless, practical and comprehensive of all pulpit topics.

V.—A SYMPOSIUM ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

NO. VIII.

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IT is too much the habit of expositors and theologians to regard the Epistle to the Romans as a theological treatise, dealing systematically with the topics of justification, sanctification and glorification. Properly understood, however, we can see in it only a profound and overwhelming polemic against a pernicious error, which would subvert the whole remedial system. This opposition colors, in a measure, the contents of every section of the Epistle. Throughout, a broad and striking contrast runs between the principle advocated and the theory opposed. By affirming of the Gospel (i: 16), that "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes," the Apostle lays down the fundamental doctrine which he intends to develop and establish against the legalistic claims and pretensions of the Jews. The Gospel *versus* the Law is the one theme of which he never loses sight in the elaboration of the details of this wonderful production. But this great generic antithesis of the Epistle involves a number of subordinate contrasts. In the predicate of the fundamental and all-comprehensive proposition above quoted from (i: 16), there are no less than five cardinal terms, key-words, which already suggest a five-fold antithesis between grace and legalism, between Christianity and Judaism. Let us study these broad differences in the light of the Apostle's own development of his great theme in the course of the Epistle.

1. When it is said that the Gospel is "*the power of God unto salvation*," etc., we have a hint as to the weakness of the law in reference to the great end here mentioned. This contrast is brought out