

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE.

BY JOHN B. GOUGH.

A good old New England deacon once said, "Brethren, I should like to make a few remarks before I begin:" and I should like to make a remark or two before I begin, before informing you that, if you had not been twice disappointed, I should have hesitated very much in coming before you, labouring under so severe and tough a cold as has almost prostrated me to-night. I am having the cold of the season just now: we generally have one or two in the course of the year that are very special, and I have one upon me now.

I come to you to-night, not with stores of learning, not with power to interest you in the literature of the country, or in science; but, if a heart that is warm towards the Young Men's Christian Association—if an intense desire to benefit the young men of this Association, of which I feel myself honored in being a member—if that will compensate for the want of other abilities—I stand on this platform second to no man. I wonder if all the lecturers before this Association have received as many communications as I have about their lectures. It would be very amusing if I should read to you the letters that I have received within the past month in reference to this address. Some are fearful that I shall give a teetotal speech; now I do not think a little teetotalism would do you any harm; and some are afraid that I shall not give a teetotal speech; now I consider there are some matters fully as important as teetotalism. But if I should follow the suggestions of all the letter-writers in reference to this speech, I should soon be nowhere at all. This afternoon I took a bit of paper, and I attempted to jot down some headings, but I came away and forgot them; but I do not know that if I had them they would do me any good; for the first time I ever attempted to use notes, before I had spoken five minutes, I so crushed them in my fingers, it was impossible to decipher them at all.—A gentleman seeing my name on your list, and reading the subject, "Power of

Example," said, "Why, what can you make of that? Why don't you take some other subject? Everybody knows that example is better than precept, and all you can do is to reiterate the same old story that everybody knows. It is better to say, 'do as I do,' than 'do as I say.' Now," he said, "What can you make of it?" I confess, that in undertaking a lecture on this subject, I can do but little more than illustrate a truth with which you are all familiar. It will be well for me to throw aside all idea of making a speech or giving a lecture, and say that which I believe is calculated to benefit young men; and just endeavour, by God's grace, to glorify Him by addressing you as a man to his fellow-men on an important and practical subject.

I speak to the Young Men's Christian Association. I do not know what writer it is—for I am not so well acquainted with literature as I might be—who says, "An honest man's the noblest work of God;" but it is a sentence which is often quoted, and quoted as being a very fine one. Now, if we mean honesty in the common acceptance of that term, it is not true; an honest man—a merely honest man in the common acceptance of the term—is not the noblest work of God; but the man who is honest towards God, and towards his fellow-men—in short, a Christian man—is the noblest work of God. I speak, I say, to Christian young men, and I believe that many of us are too much in the habit of looking at the duties of a Christian as confined to mere religious ordinances, and forget, or lose sight of, the fact that man is a social being, and that his religion does not render him less a social being. In the Bible, duties, commendations, promises constantly refer to the social life, walking with God and before God, as having to live with and before men in all the necessary associations of life, family relations, business relations, the social compact in which the Christian is not to be a mere cypher, but to bring into society a new