

as unnecessary will also regard it as misleading; for with such persons the apparently false doctrine of Mr. Brooks will have the effect of doctrine really false, since they, understanding it in its apparent sense, will accept it as in that sense true.

The whole spirit of Mr. Brooks's teaching forbids us to suspect that he lightly plays with expression, like a man having no fixed beliefs of his own, and willing to let himself be taken differently by one hearer or reader and another, as each may choose to take him. He is a serious and earnest soul, with the highest ideal of truth and manliness. In short, he is perfectly genuine.

And we thus come upon what is most admirable of all in his *style*, that is, exquisite genuineness. His own description of what style should be is an unconscious likeness taken from himself. In his "Lectures on Preaching" he says that style should be "so simple and flexible an organ that through it the moving and changing thought can utter itself freely." This is exactly true of Mr. Brooks's style. The consequence is, that whenever Mr. Brooks's thought rises, his style rises with it, and when his thought sinks, his style sinks with it. His style, in short, is constantly just equal to his thought. This is meant as almost the highest praise; but it allows one still to admit that sometimes Mr. Brooks's style is very faulty. The chief fault of his style is the fault of its chief virtue. Its chief virtue lies in its being simple, straightforward, easy, unaffected, natural; its chief fault is its tendency to become negligent, negligent to the verge, or beyond it, of downright slovenliness. This, however, without losing its constant character of genuineness; for the expression is negligent generally when there was negligence in the thought. If Mr. Brooks has, and occasionally he does have, a rather vague sentimentalism of view, to express, his expression sympathizes and becomes unsatisfactory accordingly. For instance, in his sermon on "Standing before God" ("Twenty Sermons"), he begins by saying: "The life which we are living now is more aware than we know of the life which is to come;" a statement, of course, tantamount to laying it down that we know more than we know that we know of the life beyond life. The first page or two following of the discourse agrees in character well with this opening sentence. And the whole introduction scarcely introduces the sermon.

Not unfrequently Mr. Brooks duplicates his relative clauses to a singular degree of perplexity. In his sermon on "The Mystery of Light," he says :

"Now and then in those first chapters of the Gospels He [Jesus] says some deep word or does some unexpected action *which* seems to startle them [the disciples] and brings a puzzled question *which* is like the first drop before the tempest of puzzled questions concerning Christ *which* has come since and which is still raging around us; but generally in those earliest days they have very few questions to ask; they seem to understand Him easily."

One feels like punning horribly and pronouncing such a sentence