

be broad in thought, but broad within the limits of eternal truth. Let us be broad in sympathy, not assuming an iceberg attitude towards men whose theological views do not exactly harmonize with ours. Let us remember that we cannot achieve genuine success without continued communion with the Unseen and the Infinite; without earnest, patient toil, prompted by the energizing influence of the Holy Spirit.

ADDRESS BY REV. J. FLECK.

At the conclusion of the valedictory, the Rev. C. E. Amaron, M.A., '79, had the degree of B.D. conferred upon him; after which the graduating class was addressed by Rev. J. Fleck, B.A., in these words:—

GENTLEMEN OF THE GRADUATING CLASS:—The pleasant, toilsome years of preparation in these halls of sacred learning are ended, and to-night you stand at the gate, girded and eager for the chosen work of your life. At the request of the faculty, one who has seen service in the field is to give you the word of welcome there. I might well hesitate to meet you in this capacity coming, as you do, like polished shafts keen and fresh from the hands of the able masters in this college, but that I call to mind the ingenuousness of the student spirit, stirring memories that bring me into complete sympathy with you. You will therefore take kindly the few plain, practical words to be spoken to-night to myself as well as to you touching our great work.

That we may use the few minutes at our disposal to the best advantage we pass by all minor subjects, and fix our thoughts on the chief end of the Christian Ministry. What is it? To glorify God by preaching His gospel, and to lead men to enjoy Him for ever. A recent English magazine writer has said that preaching is one of the lost arts. What shall we say then of the millions of thoughtful men and women throughout Christendom, that habitually seek the Temple of God to hear His preachers preach? Are they all victims of delusion? For thousands of years the pulpit has been sacredly separated from the rest of the house of God, by Divine appointment, and one class of men sacredly separated to minister there. Across the centuries this order in God's house has travelled, repeating itself in hamlet and city, widening and multiplying as time rolls on. Did the easy essayist pause to consider what necessity so vast and vital demanded and perpetuated all this, or what hidden fountains poured forth year after year supplies equal to the demand? From the beginning preaching has been foolishness in the eyes of many, yet it pleases God by such foolishness to save them that believe. The pulpit is still the throne of living truth. He who was Himself the "Word of Life" to whose prophets of old the "Word of the Lord" came, whose immediate forerunner was "A Voice," gave this commission to His Apostles "Preach the Gospel to every creature, and lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Preaching the Gospel therefore is your great work, and His command, and His presence, your authority and

power. If you have not these, enter not upon the work. If you can help it, do not preach. A man may well question his right to occupy the pulpit unless he feels like Jeremiah "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay," or, like Paul, "Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel."

At the very outset therefore, add to your foundation trust in God, a high and holy faith in your work, the absolute necessity of it, the sublime vastness of it, and the blessed assurance of its ultimate success.

Of the many aspects of the subject which might be presented to you to-night I have chosen this special one, The Place of the Personal Element in Preaching. There are at least three forms of the personal that should find place in the sermon:—First, that relating to the congregation; second, to the subject matter; and the third, that of the preacher himself.

First, the personal element in the congregation as it affects the preaching. "When a man preaches to me," says Daniel Webster, "I want him to make it a personal matter." But is it ever justifiable, you ask, for a minister to bring personalities into the pulpit? If by personalities you mean the gratification publicly of private pique, it is not only unjustifiable, it is unpardonable. But if you mean the bearing in his memory and heart of individual cases of necessity, sorrow, or sin, then the minister ought always to be personal. The essayist avoids direct contact, and in an essay impersonality is becoming. The faithful preacher, on the contrary, studies directness. He individualizes his audience. An eminent lawyer, when addressing a jury, was in the habit of selecting mentally the most stupid looking man of the twelve, using all his powers to convince and persuade that one; so the preacher ought not to regard his congregation collectively, but should individualize, and convince, and persuade. Martin Luther said he liked 'thees' and 'thous' in a sermon.

The very name the master gave His first disciples, *fishers of men* implies personal dealing. "He that winneth souls is wise." The huntsman does not fire aimlessly in the air when he sights his game. Nor does the Apostle Paul in his preaching, "fight uncertainly, beating the air," but becomes "all things to all men, if by any means he may gain some." So the true preacher must divide his congregation, family by family, member from member, remembering the young and the old, the rude and the refined, the saved and the unsaved. The burdened, troubled, sorrowing, seeking, repenting, trembling, believing ones, all press into God's house expecting to find the help appropriate there. He who would be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," must "rightly divide the word of truth, giving to each his portion in due season."

This will also determine for you the value of pastoral visitation. It should freshen and fertilize every sermon. After the Bible the preacher's best book is his own con-