

## Our Contributors.

### THE RIGHT FRAME OF MIND FOR SPEAKING.

BY KNOXONIAN.

"If I am in the right frame I will make a vigorous speech! It is in my mind, if I can get it out." So wrote George Brown to a member of his family the day before he delivered his great speech on Confederation in Quebec in February, 1865. Next evening he spoke from eight o'clock until half-past twelve, and immediately afterward wrote to the same friend that he thought his speech was "pretty successful." No doubt it was, from which we may infer that the veteran statesman was in the right frame of mind.

Anybody accustomed to see and hear George Brown would have thought that he was far removed from any such necessity as considering his frame of mind when about to speak. He was the one man that seemed always ready. His splendid physique, his undaunted courage, his enthusiasm, his accurate acquaintance with political questions, and his long practice as a public speaker, seemed to raise him far above any such question as the frame of mind he was in when about to make an effort. And yet it is very evident that Mr. Brown felt that no matter how well he was prepared in other respects, if not in a good frame of mind at the time of delivery, his speech might be a comparative failure. If this was true of a man like George Brown, it must certainly be true of lesser and weaker men. No matter how well prepared a man may be to speak or preach, if his mind is not in a proper frame for work when the moment for action comes all his preparation goes for little or nothing. His piece may be well loaded with the best ammunition, but if it "hangs fire" there will be nothing struck. As Mr. Brown said, the matter may be in one's mind, but if one cannot get it out in good style, the fact of its being there does no good. Your hearers are not supposed to know there is anything there if you bring nothing out. If what you bring out is poor in quality and ragged in form the people who listen must be excused if they conclude that the stock is like the sample.

This "frame-of-mind" theory explains the great difference often seen between the sermons and speeches of the same man. You hear a minister preach, and you are delighted and edified. He is at his best. He brings the truth to bear on every part of your nature, and when you leave church you are at your best too. You hear the same man again. Everything is changed. The fervour, the unction, the power is gone. The whole operation seemed like drawing teeth. What made the difference? Ninety-nine times out of a hundred the difference arises from the frame of mind in which the preacher was at the time of delivery. The sermon may have been the same one. That is, the words may have been the same, but the power was gone. And the power was gone most likely because the preacher was not in a frame of mind to preach with power.

Not long ago we read of a gentleman who heard Dr. Guthrie preach the same sermon within a few weeks. The first time the Doctor was in his own pulpit, the church was crowded, the preacher was at his best, and the effect was wonderful. The next time the Doctor was from home on a holiday tour, the surroundings were not favourable, and the hearer could scarcely believe he was listening to the same man. The sermon is in one of Guthrie's volumes, and no doubt the words were exactly the same on both occasions. The preacher did not *feel* the same, and that made the difference. Perhaps the hearer was not in the same frame of mind, and that may have helped to make the difference seem greater.

If so much depends on the frame of mind in which one speaks or preaches, it might be well to mention some of the chief causes that produce frames of mind unfavourable to good speaking and preaching.

Poor health will do it. There are certain diseases of the digestive organs which make it almost impossible for a minister to preach well. The Gospel should be preached in a cheerful, hopeful tone, and it is almost impossible to give it a cheerful, hopeful tone if one's liver is on strike. Many a good man has broken down at this point. Their sluggish liver gave a desponding tone to their preaching, and the people generally avoid men with a desponding tone. The difference between the tone of a man in fine health and the tone of a semi-invalid is easily detected.

It is difficult, almost impossible, for a preacher suffering from certain kinds of bodily troubles to be in the best frame of mind for addressing his fellow-men.

Worry produces a frame of mind in which it is next to impossible to do good pulpit work. People sometimes say they wonder why ministers do not preach better. We have many a time wondered that some ministers can preach at all. Knowing all the circumstances under which they prepared and preached fairly good sermons, the fact that they were able to do so seemed to us almost as great a miracle as the raising of Lazarus from the dead. It was a miracle of grace that enabled them to do so.

Of all kinds of worry the kind that is certain to put a preacher in a poor frame of mind for his pulpit is worry that comes from the congregation. It may be possible for a minister to preach in a proper frame of mind to people that treat him meanly or abuse him. It may be possible, because grace can enable a man to do almost anything, but the supply of grace must be very large and very constant that enables a man to preach in a proper frame of mind to people from whose injuries he is smarting.

It may be asked if the rush of our modern life does not often injure pulpit services. A minister goes to an appointment to preach for a neighbour by the train which lands him about the time for service. The train is perhaps a little late. All the way he was worrying for fear of being late. Perhaps he read the daily papers on the way. He rushes from the train to the pulpit. Is that brother in a good frame for preaching? Just ask himself.

There are many moral and spiritual causes that put one in a bad frame of mind for pulpit work. These we do not discuss. Everybody should try to find them out for himself.

The one thing clear is that to do God's work well ministers must prepare *themselves* as well as their sermons. If so much depends on the frame of mind, no reasonable effort should be spared by ministers to have the frame of mind as nearly right as possible. Their congregations and especially their office-bearers should help them. The best sermon that ever was prepared may be spoiled during the ten minutes before the service. One of the modern ways the devil has of spoiling sermons is to push a lot of doubtful notices into the preacher's hands just before service. A few people want the notices read, and perhaps commented on, and a good many people of much higher character do not want any such notices read from the pulpit. The minister has to decide the question just before offering his invocation prayer. Perhaps he has to listen to some impertinent feather-head argue in favour of the notices. And, having engaged for a time in the highly spiritual exercise of considering whether his pulpit should be used as a deadhead advertising medium, he is expected to be in a good frame of mind for spiritual worship!

### THE SWISS LAKE DWELLINGS.

A STORY OF PREHISTORIC TIMES.

On returning from my visit to the Jura last summer I remained a few hours in Neuchâtel, to renew my acquaintance with the fine collection in the museum of the "relics" found on the sites of the

PFAHLBAUTEN,

as these ancient lake dwellings are called in German Switzerland. A brief account of this lacustrine form of prehistoric life may interest some of your readers. Of course this summary must be very general and imperfect, but still sufficient to give readers some idea of this strange phase of human existence. Those who desire fuller information can consult Dr. Ferdinand Keller's "Lake Dwellings," or Sir John Lubbock's "Prehistoric Times." I have, on different occasions, spent some hours in the museums of Zurich, Berne and Neuchâtel, where the best collections of "relics" are to be found; and I have been favoured with a sight of some of the original positions of the "palafittes," as the "pile-dwellings" are called in French Switzerland. I have seen the piles still standing to testify to the abode, at some remote period, of groups of families, perhaps whole tribes, who maintained themselves partly by fishing, and partly by the produce of the field and of the fold.

In 1829 workmen engaged in deepening a harbour at Ober-Meilen, on the shore of the Lake of Zurich, found piles still standing and other remains; the meaning of which was not then even suspected.

Twenty-five years later—1853-54—occurred a remarkably dry season, which lowered the water in the lakes and rivers to a point previously unknown, exposing posts and relics which could no longer be overlooked. The subject was taken up by the Antiquarian Society of Zurich, of which Dr. Keller was president, and an investigation then began, and is still continued, which shows that these dwellings were not confined to any particular lake, but were common to all the Swiss lakes; and increasing light is being yearly thrown on these discoveries.

### STRUCTURE OF LAKE DWELLINGS.

The huts were supported on wooden posts, from four to eight inches thick, cut from the neighbouring forests, and pointed by stone axes. They were driven into the mud or gravel of the lake by stones or mallets, many of which have been found. Originally, these piles must have been arranged in a certain order, but what that was cannot now be certainly known. At present, they are inclined at different angles, and look in some cases like a young forest after a hurricane. The heads of the posts must have been at one time level or nearly so, and a few feet above the surface of the water. The rows of posts farthest from the shore were secured by twigs or wattle work connecting them together, so as to lessen the force of the waves. On these were fastened, by wooden pins, rude platforms composed of trees from ten to twelve feet long, laid alongside of each other, and bound together. Over these trees were sometimes placed split boards which made the flooring stable if not elegant. In some cases a bed of mud and gravel was spread over, and beaten down by the feet or by mallets. The precise

### FORM OF THE HUTS

is not known, though probably they were oblong in shape. In some museums they are represented as oblong or square or round, according to the fancy of the artist or archæologist. Whatever the form, the framework attached to the platforms was bound together with wattle work, covered inside and out with a coating of clay, some of which has been found in a half-burnt state, with the print of the wattles quite distinct. A few pieces, more or less convex, have led some to infer the round form of the huts; but these fragments are too small to give any sure indication of the shape or diameter of the huts. The reeds and straw found in abundance make it certain that these, with bark and rushes, constituted the covering or roof.

What divisions there were in the houses and the position and size of the doors and windows, if such there were, it is impossible now to say. But in the centre of the floor was a hearth of slabs of stone, some of which have been found *in situ*. From the number of clay weights for weaving remaining, it is inferred that each hut had a loom. Portions of young trees found with their branches partially lopped off, are supposed to have been fastened to the roofs or walls, to suspend on them mats, nets and earthenware vessels provided with string handles.

### FASCINE DWELLINGS.

Some habitations, from their peculiar substructure, have received this name. They are supported on layers of sticks bound together, or stems of trees placed parallel and crosswise on each other from the bottom of the lake to the surface. To keep these in their place, piles are inserted at different parts, and driven into the mud. Huts of this kind are found only in the smaller lakes, and belong to the stone age. Where the bottom was rocky, the trees and posts were kept steady by a heap of stones deposited around them. In other cases, where the mud was too soft to hold the piles, they were morticed into a framework of tree trunks placed horizontally on the bottom.

### CRANNOGES

is the name given to similar buildings found in Ireland and Scotland, for such dwellings were not confined to Switzerland. The Irish crannoges were first brought into notice by Sir W. R. Wilde in 1840. They were frequently placed on natural islands, though sometimes they were built up from the bottom of the lake. They were surrounded by a stockade of piles driven into the bed of the lake, in the form of a circle or oval, from sixty to 130 feet in diameter. These are generally regarded as having been fastnesses for predatory chiefs or robbers who used them as places of occasional retreat. Generally speaking, they were only accessible by water, and in almost