

fancy that the reducing of expenditure will be regarded by the Church generally as anything but "an astounding proposal." That the professors of Yale College have a very different estimate of Dr. Hall and his lectures from that of your correspondent is manifest from their joint letter of thanks to him in which they say, "You have been giving in your own style, simple, lucid and forcible—not a theory or science of homiletics deduced from your study of great preachers ancient and modern, but (in accordance with the intention of the generous founder) practical counsels drawn from your own experience through a long and eminently successful ministry" etc. The professors of Yale with one consent here place the practical counsels of Dr. Hall, drawn from his own experience, in contrast to a mere theory of homiletics formed in the ordinary course of study. But the most marvellous feature in your correspondent's letter is the specimen of reasoning which he gives us as to Dr. Hall's incompetency. The self-depreciatory allusions of the apostle Paul might as well be used to prove that Paul was "the least of the apostles," and not "meek to be called an apostle" and that he was "less than the least of all saints!" Almost equally grotesque and morbid is his theory of pulpit popularity. All popular preachers are "frauds," and all the people are fools! "Anti-bombasts" letter, taken as a whole, is very amusing, but we should have anticipated meeting with it rather among the antique curiosities of some old museum than in the periodical literature of the present day. However, it has rendered good service in helping to bring about the change of system in the homiletical training of our students which many throughout the Church have long been anxious to see inaugurated. We should do the very best for our students that we possibly can. Every friend of the college and of the cause with which it is identified must regret a deficient current revenue, and from a sense of duty suggest and urge every measure that he thinks fitted to strengthen the position of the institution, and command the greater appreciation and liberality of our people. In this spirit and with these motives I have written. Your correspondent's main position is that the Yale lectures were never intended to supersede the regular professor. I answer, we have no professor of homiletics in Knox College at present, and instead of one lecturer I want to see three or four, at less expense, and the hearing of discourses entrusted to the regular professors. They can well take charge of the part of the work in homiletics not overtaken by the lecturers, I am convinced, although it may make their work pretty heavy.

His second position is that the Yale system is not the best. I shall neither spend your space nor my own time in refuting such gratuitous assertion.

CLERICUS.

#### VIGOROUS AND SUCCESSFUL PREACHERS—A DREAM.

MR. EDITOR,—In a recent number of the PRESBYTERIAN, I noticed an article on "Public Speaking." The writer proves satisfactorily that the wide diffusion of knowledge by the press has not superseded speakings or teaching from the platform or the pulpit. There are in the article many stimulating and suggestive thoughts. But these last, to my view, are more suitable to the public speaker, so called, than to the preacher. The kind of oration the writer has in view is what Aristotle calls "demonstrative;" that is "an oration intended to excite and gratify the hearers, or spectators, and to lead them to form a high opinion of the abilities of the orator." But such an oration does not seriously contemplate and strive after an ulterior moral end. The orator according to your correspondent, is to surround himself with an eager and pressing auditory, which he is to gratify and electrify. True; but so far as the preacher of the Gospel is concerned, *cui bono?* On this principle, the exposition of the Word of God and the direct practical benefit of the hearers are entirely overlooked. The writer says, "Let such a man come before an audience with a firm and intelligent grasp of his subject, and with an ability to ransack literature, science, and art for illustrations, and let him be in sympathy with all nature, and he will soon surround himself with an eager and pressing auditory." Rhetorically even, he would have been much nearer correct, had he said, "Let such a man come before an audience with a firm and intelligent grasp of some living Gospel truth, with an ability to unfold its true and full meaning, and to reveal

its glory and beauty, and to bring it into contact with some noble principle in his hearers' minds, and he will no doubt, by the blessing of God, be instrumental in converting sinners and in sanctifying and comforting believers, and he will soon be surrounded by many who are thirsting for the word of life, and by others who wish to know what they must do to be saved." The writer may say that he did not specially refer to preaching, but to what Aristotle calls demonstrative eloquence. Well, grant this, although all kinds of public speaking are fairly included in the article and under the principle enforced, which is, that eloquence is not to be found in the moral excellence or in the moral truth which is the subject of discourse but in something *external* to either; but what I fear is that young preachers, and others too, may suppose the writer's words specially intended for them. Now, when first I read the sentence that I have put in Italics, and which indeed contains the pith of the whole article,—it was very late, and I was just about "to turn in" I became completely overpowered and prostrated, and sank into a profound sleep.

Suddenly there was presented to my "astonished and admiring eyes" a scene of transcendent beauty and grandeur. It was a garden with a fine southern exposure, watered with living streams, and having in it "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." It seemed like Paradise restored. It had one high and most beautiful gate, and several other smaller gates, which were easier of access from the public road. It appears that the Lord of this garden has appointed certain persons to enter at stated times, to walk in its cool shade and enjoy its rich fruits, and also to guide into it as many as they can induce to accompany them.

Soon one of these appointed persons appeared at the splendid gate; he seemed to walk with an elastic step and to be fully conscious of his own importance; and he was followed by a large number of persons very like himself. His followers did not seem to value admission into the garden nor to care for or relish its fruits; but they all had their eyes steadily fixed on their leader, and they seemed most anxious to see how he would act. He did not keep them long in suspense, for he at once descried an apple under a tree, and partially covered with leaves. To this he directed attention. He did not advance near to it, but walked around it, looking at it, and gesticulating in such a manner that the spectators became greatly excited even before he opened his mouth. Then he asked with apparent astonishment, What is this? Amidst breathless silence he said, It is a potato. To verify this, he proceeded out to a potato field and dug potatoes till he found one very like the object lying underneath the tree; but on comparing them, it was evident he had made a mistake. Can it then be a walnut? To settle this question an excursion had to be made to the forest where many objects most beautiful to persons in sympathy with nature were seen, and a walnut was found. This was subsequently ascertained not to be of the same kind as the fruit found in the garden. Can it be a diamond, or some precious stone? As there was no place near where diamonds could be found, it was necessary to describe one, and also the appearance of diamonds lying dark and lustreless in the secret mine; from this it appeared that it could not be a diamond. Can it then be a fallen star? It was confessedly not luminous; still the answer to this question revealed an extensive knowledge of astronomy. By this time the spectators had become greatly excited and electrified. Taking advantage of their state of mind, he approached near enough to touch the object with his foot, and at once declared that it was an apple. This gave scope for an elaborate and learned description of the various kinds of apples, which was concluded with a fine classical allusion to the golden apples of the Hesperides. Amidst the tremendous applause thus elicited, the assembly broke up, all declaring that they would return and bring their friends and acquaintances a week hence, or even sooner if some saints' day or holiday should intervene, in which case a still more interesting performance might be expected.

While these things were transpiring, quite a different class of persons had entered by one of the side gates without any pomp or display. Their humble and serious leader could scarcely be distinguished from his companions. All were delighted to enter into the garden, and all were eager to take its nourishing and invigorating fruit. Their leader proceeded at

once to a tree in the midst of the garden, and after speaking of the fruit and its refreshing juices, he plucked an apple and peeled it, and cut it up with care, giving a piece to each. They were all delighted with the fruit. The supply was inexhaustible, as the fruit increased as fast as the guide divided and distributed it. When they were all satisfied, there was enough left of the one apple to carry home for the future use of themselves and friends. With fervent gratitude, they gave thanks to Him who had planted the trees, and permitted them to eat of the fruit. Their leader pointed out many other trees to which in course of time he would conduct them. All were not equally sweet and beautiful; but all were needed to their perfect nourishment and health. He told them further, that after subsisting on these fruits for a time they would be permitted to eat of the tree of life that grows in the midst of the paradise of God. I can never forget the look of satisfaction and gratitude with which they left the garden. They had evidently had meat to eat that the world knoweth not of. I was anxious to join them; I felt my heart beating, and I knew that tears were streaming from my eyes; but I could not move. At last the noise made by the shutting of the gate awakened me; and with deep disappointment and sorrow I discovered that it was a dream. Still the impression made on my mind was such that I could sleep no more that night. I tried to dismiss the whole scene, but I could not. It haunted me day and night so that I could not get rid of it. I began to think it must mean something. At last the thought occurred to me, "These things are an allegory;" the one leader evidently represents some of our "vigorous and successful preachers;" the other as clearly represents "that faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season."

VERBUM SAT.

#### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

[The following address in substance was delivered by Dr. Cochrane, on the occasion of the ordination and induction of elders in Zion Church, Brantford, on Sabbath Jan. 19th, 1879. It would be well if more frequent reference was made from our pulpits, to the distinctive features of our Presbyterian Church polity.]

It is customary on such occasions, to make a brief statement of Presbyterian principles. Many of our youth are growing up in ignorance of the reasons why they belong to one church more than another. And many adults, so long as their particular church is large and flourishing, care not to enquire into the method of its government, and the special functions of its different office-bearers. This spirit of indifference is to be deprecated. It is not calculated to make an intelligent or reliable membership, or to increase attachment to those fundamental doctrines which have, for ages, received the approval of intelligent men, not only within, but beyond our own denomination.

It is not asserted, save by extremists, that the precise form and order of church government held and practised by any one denomination at the present day is to be found detailed in the New Testament Scriptures. If it were stated in so many words, that Episcopacy or Presbyterianism or Congregationalism, was the only correct form of government, then it would clearly be wrong for any Christian man or woman to belong to any other. But inasmuch as the New Testament contains only general principles, it has been left to the different branches of Christ's Church—who are at one regarding the great essentials of our faith—to model their order of government and discipline as each conscientiously thinks is most in accordance with the simplicity and comprehensiveness of the Apostolic Church.

Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Congregationalists, all affirm that their respective forms of church government, are laid down in Scripture. By this, however, it is only meant that the leading features of this or that system are sanctioned by the word of God. They do not claim direct scriptural authority for its details, nor deny that there are many things of minor importance, connected with the government of the visible Church, which the Church herself may change and regulate, as she sees fit from time to time, in conformity with the requirements of the age. It is in this sense that we affirm, that "the Presbyterian form of church government in its fundamental features and leading principles, is sanctioned by Scripture and apostolic practice," or to adopt the language of our stand-