

desire to impress on any one the necessity of cultivating a style approaching a theatrical performance; far from it. He loves the simple presentation of the truth. And it is the simple, dignified, off-hand, ready, earnest manner that will reach the hearts of men more easily than any other.

This is a matter worthy the attention of the minister of the Gospel, if it has not already been upon his mind. And the denomination that gives earnest attention to it will have an advantage over all others who give the subject little or no consideration.

AN ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL THANKSGIVING.

The Autumnal Meeting of the English Congregational Union, held in Surrey Chapel, London, in October, seems to have been characterized very much by the spirit of thanksgiving, the Wednesday evening service having been wholly devoted to exercises of that nature. The Rev. J. R. Thomson delivered an address on "The gratitude due to God for the service He has permitted the Congregational Churches to render to His kingdom during the last two centuries."

Cautioning his audience, at the outset, against all boasting and glorification of self, he briefly called on them to praise God for their forefathers; for their enlightenment by divine grace; for their fidelity to conscience; and for the support given to them during a long period of injustice, and civil and religious disability.

Going back two centuries, he said, we reach a period of cruel, monstrous, and indefensible oppression. The Independents—who a few years before, when Cromwell was at their head, with Milton at his side, had not only baffled the craft of the king, but frustrated the bigotry of the Presbyterians, as well as crushed the tyranny of the bishops—were now powerless and despised. * * *

There was no tolerance for Nonconformists under the sceptres of Charles the Second, or his brother James. The Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, the Oxford or Five Mile Act, the Test Act, made life in England bitter to all who did not conform, and hardly endurable to many Nonconforming ministers. And what men they were to be treated thus! Men "of whom the world was not worthy!" Owen and Howe, and Goodwin, and Nye—to speak of Independents only—what men to silence and to persecute! Yet they stood firm to their convictions. And the lesson they thus taught posterity—of the supremacy of conscience—is a lesson for which we cannot be too grateful. * * * * * During the reign of Anne, the Court and the populace vied with each other in insulting their faith and endangering their liberties. Meeting-houses were destroyed by the mob. A Bill to silence every teacher in a Nonconformist school or academy was passed through Parliament. Freedom of speech brought Dissenters to the pillory and the prison. Men of wealth were elected to offices, the conditions of which their consciences forbade them to fulfil, for the mere purpose that they might be mercilessly fined. Yet they swerved not in their loyalty to the Constitution they had once and again preserved by their self-forgetfulness. And when the long-delayed relief was gained, it was gained not by the conversion of their foes, but by their own growing and irresistible power.

He called on them, too, to give thanks for the fidelity of the Congregational Churches of this country to the great truths of Christianity. Among the Presbyterians and General Baptists, there took place, during the last century, a wide-spread departure from Scriptural truth. Though surrounded by examples of defection, our churches remained steadfast. The reasons of this fact I cannot now explain. But it deserves to be noticed that churches which have never acknowledged a human creed, and have never called for subscription to formularies and standards, have nevertheless remained loyal to our common Christianity. The fact may be commended to the attention of those who insist upon the imposition, by statutory