

with the buffoonery which are too often employed and which are at war both with religious feeling and good taste, but he speaks of them at the same time with a directness and a circumstantiality, such as we might employ in speaking about the friend who visited us yesterday or about the business we are going to transact to-morrow; or in writing to a person regarding a country with which we are familiar and which he is about to visit. There is as the result an air of realness given to the subjects of which he treats, which in the measure of it is very rare, but which is at the same time most helpful to the hearer. Evidently the world of spiritual things is a very real world to him. He has looked it in the face. He has scrutinized it closely, and he speaks of it with a simplicity and a directness and withal a confidence that must go far to make it real to others also. This is indeed about the most original and distinctive characteristic of the sermons of this great preacher; as it is one of their highest merits, if not indeed their very highest. For there is scarcely any service, which a Christian man can render to his fellowmen more important at least in our age, than to invest the spiritual world with realness to them; not to divest it of its mystery, for if that were possible, it would be a loss and not a gain, but to take it out of the region of cloudland and dream and give to it the air of definite, undeniable reality, which we must believe belongs to it. To do this, it must be altogether real to the man himself. His speech regarding it must be obviously and entirely sincere. It must be impossible for even the most sensitive hearer to detect in it the false and therefore the disenchanting note. This was in a high degree, and with all his faults, the service which Newman rendered to our common Christianity and by it he made not simply the Oxford of his day, but the pulpit of England and of America in ours, his debtor.

I have thus passed in review, at undue length, I fear, these distinguished preachers, all of whom "now rest from their labors." As the result, I trust, they stand out before you in their distinct individuality; Vinet, the calm, philosophic enquirer, the representative of reason in relation to religion, original in thought, graceful in speech, lofty in character, sweet and gentle in spirit, looking with wistful and tender sorrow, even on those who hesitate to enter, or who actually turn away from, the great temple of truth and love within which he worships. Liddon, the princely preacher, the representative of authority, of dogma in religion, cultured, stately, eloquent, witnessing with a power which in our age has not been surpassed, if indeed it has been equalled for the super-