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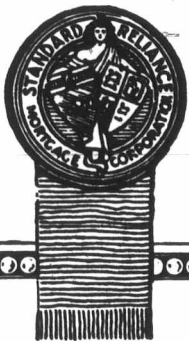
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Correspondence

A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER ON PREACHING.

Sir,—In reply to a "Commercial Traveller on Preaching," I send you the following. Dr. Maclaren, of Manchester, a Prince of Preachers, once said, "Burn all your manuscripts, and never write any more to be read in a pulpit. Whatever else you may do with your pen, I believe the worst thing you can do with it, is to write sermons with it." Such advice, I believe, is too sweeping and one-sided. It lacks discrimination. It is a premium upon laziness. Dr. Maclaren did not follow such advice himself, or how comes it that we have his printed sermons, and his famous expositions of Sunday School Lessons? What! Never write a sermon? There must be a mistake somewhere. A man may preach extemporaneous, and talk trash, but he is not likely to write trash.

Hear what another authority (equally good) has to say anent extemporaneous and written sermons:—"If with the full manuscript before him, the preacher finds the people still as mice, and the old men leaning forward to catch every word, then he needs no advice from Hall or Storrs, but he should go into his closet and bless his Father in Heaven for empowering him to catch upon white paper the burning thoughts of a whole week, and to read them to the people without a loss.

"As the written musical notes caught the dreaming of Mozart and Beethoven, and thus kept the best hours of their souls from escaping, so the manuscript of many a preacher catches all the lofty thoughts and feelings of a week,—of morning, evening and midnight—and carries them without a loss to the hungry multitude.

"There are souls whose thoughts come when they are in the presence of the multitude. These become extemporaneous speakers. There are others whose brains begin to live the moment they strike a solitude. These are the writers. All they can do before the people is to read what the solitude said to their hearts. The difference between the two men, is the difference between two roses or two blades of grass."—(The late Dr. David Swing, of Chicago.)

Some of the best preachers of our Anglican Communion have been manuscript preachers. I need only instance Liddon, Farrar, and our own late Bishop Carmichael. And what about Dr. Chalmers? He read his sermons, though a Presbyterian. He never even looked at his congregation but up at the ceiling and down at his manuscript. But his thoughts flamed up at white heat and kindled extraordinary emotion and excitement amongst his hearers. The students who crowded to hear him could not refrain from cheering.

The secret of manuscript preaching lies in two things: A good manuscript and a man who knows how to use it. People do not object to a manuscript that glows with life and spirit.

(Rev.) J. Edmonds,
 237 Wortley Rd., London, Ont.

Sir,—In reading this week's edition of your paper, I was much interested in the letter of Mr. J. J. Rooney on the subject of Preaching.

I am in accord with his sentiments. I think that it is about time that our clergy realized more than they do, the great importance of preaching good sermons, as a means of helping their people. Frequently I have heard parsons say, "Oh, I can't preach," and they seem to think that preaching is not very important. They argue that the people should come to church to worship, etc. Now while worship should be put first, preaching should

not be considered a minor matter. People should go to church primarily to worship, but yet they have a right to hear a good sermon as well, and the clergyman should endeavour to meet their needs. The man who does not try to get up a good sermon ought to be ashamed of himself. He is missing a great opportunity of doing good. Then good preaching is a very effective agency in increasing the attendances at the services, for most people like a good sermon.

We clergy should remember that we were not ordained simply to administer the Sacraments and say the daily offices. We are to preach the Word of God as well, and this duty is emphasized in the Ordination Service.

Preaching should be emphasized more than it is in our colleges. One hour a week during term is not sufficient time for this important branch of work. Divinity students should be sent out to preach in parishes near the college, and their manner of delivery as well as the matter of their sermons, should be well noted by their Professor of Homiletics who should be present in the congregation, and who could at his next lecture criticize the student's efforts. This method is pursued by other Christian Communions, and I am sure that such criticisms would be more helpful to the student than the flattering remarks which well-meaning females often make to the young man after the service is concluded. Very frequently their remarks are not in accord with the truth.

I shall never forget what Dr. Seager told us once at college when he gave a series of lectures on Homiletics. He said: "Gentlemen, the chief cause of poor preaching is laziness." Any clergyman can if he will, become an acceptable preacher, and it is a matter which should be attended to by us all, as so much good can be done.

Sincerely yours,

(Rev.) P. H. Streeter.

Merlin, Ont.

COMMUNION VESSELS WANTED.

Mr. Editor,—The Incumbent of a weak, struggling Mission appeals for communion vessels of small and convenient size. Can any of the readers of this paper help him? If so, please write the Editor for particulars.

Yours truly,

Communicant.

SCRIPTURE GIFT MISSION.

We beg to acknowledge a further contribution of \$2 towards this worthy object.

The Church Army has received a large collection of old jewelry, watches, small silver articles, and coins given by residents of Bath in aid of its recreation hut work amongst the troops. The coins include a Henry VIII. sixpence, a Philip and Mary three penny bit, an Elizabethan shilling, and Victorian Maundy money, in addition to numerous curiosities of foreign mintage.

The Signs of the Times

AND OTHER SERMONS ON THE PRESENT CRISIS

By the Right Reverend EDWARD J. BIDWELL, M.A. (Oxford), D.D., D.C.L., Bishop of Kingston and Coadjutor of the Diocese of Ontario.

Note.—Any profits arising from the sale of this book will be given to the funds of the Canadian Red Cross Society.

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