

the matter of a sermon. Each should give a verdict in his own idiom, and would say, 'The preacher drives a roaring business with a small capital,' or 'He has more words than sense,' or 'He kept his mill going when his corn was ground,' or 'He spun when his wool was done,' or 'His warp was too long for his weft,' or 'Had he ended when he had done, he would never have begun.' (Laughter.) If such observations were common about the same man, he must be wanting in fascination to attract the people to his ministry. There was always enough in a text, if a minister had power to develop it. Method was no more essential in the shop than it was in the sermon. Many sermons were but an undisciplined mob of ideas. The preacher must be both architect and builder; a sermon must be a house, and not materials only; a picture, and not canvass, colour, and pencil. He did not look with any favour on that uniformity which, whatever the theme, developed into the same number of heads and particulars, which forcibly compressed every text into the same mould, despite every remonstrance. Some had method in their madness: these had madness in their method. (Laughter.) Always to consider, first, what a text taught, and secondly what it did not teach; or firstly, what it implied, and secondly, what it affirmed, was a species of homiletic carpentry which it would require excellence on the part of any man to keep up for many years. (Laughter.) There was a great difference between the want of method and liberality in the treatment of it, as there was between reaching a destination by the direct railway, the road, or river. A mistaken conception of what was demanded by a fair adherence to method was one of the prolific sources of dullness in the pulpit. Many were peerless on the platform who could not preach. A preacher ought to speak in such language that he must be understood, to lay the resources of illustration under tribute, and to be fervent and earnest in spirit. There was no model manner, nor model man. Advice to copy somebody else was about as wise as a recommendation to change one's personality; every man was best "in his own order;" whilst that might be improved, it could not be exchanged without permanent injury to the man and his influence."

Poetry.

DEDICATION HYMN.

BY THE REV. ROBERT BROWN.

[Sung at the dedication of the new Congregational Chapel, Garafaxa, on Sabbath, March 4th, 1865.]

We humbly, Lord, before Thy throne
 In solemn concourse now appear;
 With humble hearts we meekly own
 The grace which bids us worship here.

Thy Spirit, Lord, did us inspire
 To build for Thee this simple fane,
 And now we meet with warm desire,
 To dedicate it to Thy name.

Accept this gift, O God, our King,—
 This unpretending work of art;
 May we with it the offering bring—
 A broken and a contrite heart.

Inscribe Thy name within this place;
 With power, in spirit, Lord appear;
 Reveal the mysteries of Thy grace,
 That each may feel, Thou, God, art here.

Here deign Thy glory oft to show,—
 Nor transient be such visits given:
 That, henceforth, we this place shall know
 As "House of God—the gate of Heaven."