

EDITORIAL SECTION.

SERMONIC CRITICISM.

Two Treatments of a Text.

A very rich passage is the following from the Psalms:

Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.—Psalm xci. 14-16.

One has presented its theme as:

"The Glorious Privileges of the Godly."

The following is his suggestive treatment:

I. Some features in the characters of the godly.

1. Love to God. 2. Knowledge of God. 3. Prayer to God.

II. Some of the glorious privileges of the godly.

1. Deliverance from danger. 2. Exaltation and consequent safety. 3. Answers to prayer. 4. The presence of God in trouble. 5. The conference of distinguished honor. 6. Satisfaction with the duration of their life upon earth. 7. Full salvation.

This may be regarded as a very rich treatment; in fact, as an over-supply of materials; but the analysis has no obvious principle, the order is confusing, and there is nothing to fix the truth in the memory. Moreover, it leaves out the one emphatic feature of the passage, Jehovah's "I wills." We would suggest for a different treatment, the theme:

"The Seven I Wills of Jehovah, or the Seven Blessings of a Godly Life."

This may be treated as follows:

The Seven "I Wills" of Jehovah, the Covenant of God, or the Seven Blessings of a Godly Life.

These naturally fall into three distinct classes, belonging to as many

stages or phases of the godly life, and may be presented as follows:

I. The Two Initial I Wills, or Blessings at the starting-point, pledging—

1st. Deliverance from sin and Satan. "I will deliver him because his heart is set on me."

2d. Exaltation and security, through his knowledge of the Divine character and attributes. "I will set him on high because he knows my name."

II. The Three I Wills of the Christian Course, or the blessings by the way, pledging—

1st. Power to prevail with God in prayer, to secure needed supply and grace. "He shall call upon me and I will answer him."

2d. The perpetual divine presence in trouble—the shadow of God as a refuge. "I will be with him in trouble."

3d. Divine deliverance and honor in danger and disgrace. "I will deliver him and honor him."

III. The Two Crowning I Wills, pledging—

1st. Long life in the favor of God. "With long life will I satisfy him." See Ps. xcii, 13-15 on the blessed old age of the righteous.

2d. God's full salvation in the heavenly glory. "And I will cause him to see my salvation."

All these blessings—filling time and spanning eternity—Jehovah WILLS should be his who knows His revelation of Himself in the Gospel of His grace, and by faith in the Cross clings to Him.

Success in Preaching.

DR. ALEXANDER MACLAREN, the distinguished English Baptist preacher, when he was lately congratulated publicly on completing fifty years in the ministry, said:

"I have tried to make my ministry a ministry of exposition of Scripture. I know it has failed in many respects, but I will say that I have endeavored from the beginning to the end to make that the characteristic of all my public work. And I've tried to preach Jesus Christ, and the Jesus Christ not of the Gospels only, but the Christ of the Gospels and the Epistles; He is the same Christ. I believe that the one thing the world wants is redemption, the power of that Gospel on the individual soul; and that men know they want it."