

rect estimate of their own discourses, and to discover wherein they excelled or failed. Thus, while Systematic Homiletics imparted knowledge, Applied Homiletics enabled students to acquire skill in the use of it.

The systematic nature of the lectures in Homiletics should also be fully taken into account. These lectures are not such as are found in published works on Homiletics, which are mainly empirical. Our lecturer teaches students to exercise their own creative or inventive powers in the discovery of subjects—powers which distinguish the historian from the annalist, or the dramatist from the mere narrator of thrilling tales. He also teaches logical processes of analysis and proof; while he explains psychologically the active powers of the hearers to which the preacher must seek to attach the idea of his discourse. He thus finds a scientific basis for his system. This kind of teaching satisfies students and also inflames them with enthusiasm in the prosecution of this study.

Such a method of teaching has given Homiletics a position in the curriculum which it could not otherwise have obtained. It has been a labour of nearly twenty years to invent and build up this system, and to acquire skill in teaching it. To take a system which has cost so much labour, and which has such magnitude and importance in the estimation of students, and to append it, as subordinate, to a subject belonging to a different category, would be logically vicious; it would also disappoint and disgust students, and it would destroy at a blow the indefatigable labours of a good part of a lifetime. Moral obliquity must be the incentive to a classification so disastrous. It can have its origin only in envy or jealousy of the lecturer, which would ruthlessly smash in pieces his department in the college, so that an apology might be found for not offering him a chair which he has occupied for so many years with honour to himself and advantage to the college and the Church.

I am happy to learn that Dr. Proudfoot is preparing for the press "Outlines of Systematic Homiletics." When it is published his work will be judged according to its merits by competent and honourable men, and not condemned by a vain and selfish clique of personal opponents.

A DEVOTED STUDENT IN HOMILETICS.

"IS IT COMPETENT?"

MR. EDITOR,—Your correspondent, "Enquirer," under the above heading, raises the question whether Presbyteries can, instead of making nominations for an additional professor for Knox College, send up to next Assembly recommendations in favour of lectureships, as some Presbyteries have already done. The point is well taken, but the answer is also very easy and obvious.

1. The Assembly in past years has been setting the example of doing things in a very loose and irregular way, so that "incompetent" is a word that has been dropped from its vocabulary, and the other courts of the Church very naturally follow the example of the Supreme Court, and do as they like.

2. The doctrine is extensively held in the Church that one Assembly is not bound by the acts of another. If so, then next Assembly is not bound to the conclusion that an additional professor should in the circumstances be appointed.

3. The Presbyteries that have expressed themselves in favour of lectureships have put their replies in the form of recommendations, and these bind nobody, and are clearly competent.

4. On no view of the case is next Assembly bound to appoint an additional professor. It may decline all the nominations that may be made, or the persons nominated may all decline nomination.

The recommendations of Presbyteries may have great influence in bringing about such a result, specially in view of the state of the Common Fund for Colleges, unless next June reveal an advance of some \$5,000 over the amount contributed last year.

RECIPROCATE.

A SILENT TIME.

Every true Christian life needs its daily "silent time," when all shall be still, when the busy activities of other hours shall cease, and when the heart, in holy hush, shall commune with God. One of the greatest needs of Christian life to-day is the revival of devotion. Ours is not an age of prayer so much as of work. The tendency is to action rather than to worship; to busy toil rather than to quiet sitting at the Saviour's feet to commune with Him.

Pastor and People.

THESE MANY YEARS.

DEUTERONOMY VIII. 2.

These many years! What lessons they unfold
Of grace and guidance through the wilderness,
From the same God that Israel of old
In the Shechinah glory did possess.
How faithful He, through all my griefs and fears
And constant murmurings, these many years!

God of the Covenant! From first to last,
From when I stood within the sprinkled door
And o'er my guilt the avenging angel passed,
Thy better angel has gone on before;
And naught but goodness all the way appears,
Unmerited and free, these many years!

Thy presence wrought a pathway through the sea;
That presence made the bitter waters sweet;
And daily have Thy hands prepared for me
Sweet precious morsels—lying at my feet.
'Twas but to stoop and taste the grace that cheers
And start refreshed, through all these many years.

What time I thirsted and earth's streams were dry,
What time I wandered and my hope was gone,
Thy hand has brought a pure and full supply,
And by a loving pressure lured me on.
How oft that hand hath wiped away my tears
And written "pardoned!" all these many years!

And what of discipline Thy love ordained
Fell ever gently on this heart of mine;
Around its briars was my spirit trained
To bring forth fruit of righteousness divine;
Wisdom in every check, and love appears
In every stroke throughout these many years!

Lord, what I might have been my spirit knows—
Rebellious, petulant and apt to stray;
Lord, what I am, in spite of flesh and foes,
I owe to grace that kept me in the way.
Thine be the glory! Merit disappears
As back I look upon these many years.

Thine be the glory! Thou shalt have the praise
For all Thy dealings, to my latest breath;
A daily Ebenezer will I raise,
And sing Salvation through the vale of death—
To where the palm, the golden harp appears,
There to rehearse thy love through endless years.

—The Christian.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

PRACTICAL METHODS OF SOUL SAVING.

BY REV. WALTER M. ROGER, M.A., LONDON.

I do not know if my experience be very different from that of my brethren; but to tell a humbling truth to-day, I could count upon the fingers of one hand the cases of conversion known to have occurred under the preaching of the Word during an earnest ministry of nearly twenty years. While I trust sincerely the coming day will reveal the fact that the actual results have been very different, yet I have felt that I could not go on with the work, unless means could be found of bringing its manifest results into closer harmony with the expectations reasonably produced by the terms of my commission. The providence of God, in ways I need not now relate, has, I believe, helped me to a better understanding of the purpose of God in this matter and helped me to answer such questions as: Are not our ordinary methods defective? Have we been right in depending so exclusively—as a large portion of the ministry does—upon preaching, even preaching of the Gospel, for the conversion of souls? Or, rather, does the popular and ordinary acceptance of that term exhaust the Scriptural import of the word, or rather words, for they are numerous and varied in the originals, and clearly indicate a varied procedure? I am satisfied that great mistakes have been made in this respect, and that the remedy lies not in less of Gospel preaching; but in sedulously, systematically supplementing it with such additions as:

III. *Gospel converse.* By this I mean *personal dealing* with the view of bringing home to the individual, in its special adaptation to his case, the truth which has already been proclaimed to the multitude. The pre-eminent value of this method seems to consist in the close contact which it secures between the spirit of the living worker and the dead soul he would bring to life—his eyes upon its eyes, his hand upon its hand, his mouth upon its mouth, as he pours into it the Word of life and, God being gracious, the miracle of miracles—results—life divine, life eternal. It is amazing how, in our love for ecclesiastical usage, our enjoyment of oratorical performance, and our shrinking from the often trying, as well as troublesome, process of tackling the enemy family by family, man by man, we have overlooked, or relegated to a subordinate and little trusted position, a class of measures which our Master meant should occupy a foremost place in our proceedings, and the importance of which daily experience should make more and more evident to the candid observer. Did He not charge us emphatically, not only to proclaim far and wide, "Come, for all

things are ready," but, that His house may be filled, follow it up by a more individual and personal appeal. Such a course of personal dealing as would make clear the meaning and the value of the invitation—and so thoroughly dispose of any excuse or hesitation as to secure speedy compliance with the call of the King.—is not this what is meant by the command, "Go out, and compel them to come in"? In the Parable of the Great Supper, our Lord seems to have given us a figurative representation of the ministry of his servants in the dispensation of the Gospel, and in the course of it He blends general principles the most instructive with standing orders the most imperative and unmistakable. Now the question is: Are not our recognition of and obedience to these orders very imperfect, and is not our work suffering in consequence? Is there not here *sanction*, nay *enjoined*, a style of dealing with perishing sinners commensurate with the momentous nature of their circumstances, yet far more *direct*, *bold* and *urgent* than is commonly adopted? This view of the case might be questioned if such description of Gospel ministry stood alone in the Scriptures. But did not the Apostles exemplify it when "*daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ*"? So, we are told, did Paul at Ephesus and elsewhere. Could anything be more urgent than the Apostle Jude's reiteration of his Master's instructions, while not forgetting wise discrimination, still to save the lost as we would pluck brands from the burning? No doubt, the half-awake will refuse to believe the house to be on fire, or the danger imminent; but we are to act as if we believed it, and thereby mightily help conviction in them, or at all events leave them without excuse, and ourselves without reproach. The lukewarm and phlegmatic will preach prudence and propriety; but we may be sure of this, no such remonstrances, or any echo of them, will be heard upon the judgment day. No soul from hell will ever charge us with ever having exceeded our instructions, or used unwarranted importunity. Talmage is right in saying we want more "holy recklessness" in the work of the Lord. We are far too much afraid of offending men, and far too little intent on pleasing God. That saintly evangelist, Simeon, of Cambridge, tells us what a startling reproof he received from his own brother, when he heard of his sudden illness, and hastened to his bedside to make sure he was in the right way. "Oh, brother," said the dying man, "is this the time to deal with such a question?" "Have I not often spoken to you of your soul's interests?" was the reply. "Yes, true, but you never called me apart, laid your hands upon me and said 'I will not let you go till you come to Christ!'" I have myself known a firm grasp of the arm by an earnest worker prove a means of grace to an impotent sinner halting at the door of the feast. Having ventured to give personal testimony of disappointment in the failure of the Gospel sermon alone to bring the sinner to close with Christ, I may be allowed here to say that, after many years' experience, I am satisfied the sedulous addition of personal dealing will turn an otherwise commonplace ministry into a perpetual harvesting of the most joyous kind; in short, that it supplies a most serious defect in the ordinary method. Plenty of confirmatory and illustrative evidence could easily be produced; but the Master's command should need no justification with loyal servants. Be it ours ever to remember the wise counsel which secured that first miracle at Cana, "when He manifested forth His glory, and His disciples believed on Him." "*Whosoever He saith unto you, do it*" He promised we should do greater things than those He did Himself and, truthfully obedient to His word and spirit, we would daily see the water of Gospel doctrine transformed into the wine of Christian experience. Alas, how often must it be that unbelief hinders mighty works, which would otherwise be wrought among us, and by us.

(To be continued.)

STRENGTH OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Our spiritual constitution must be braced, not only that we may be strong for work or fight, but that we may be proof against the infection of the times, against the poison with which the god of this world, "the prince of the power of the air," has impregnated our atmosphere. In this we need not only the "strong meat" recommended by the Apostle (Heb. v. 12-14), but the keen, fresh mountain air of trial, vicissitude and hardship, by means of which we shall be made hardy in constitution and robust in frame, impervious to the contagion around, whether that come from ecclesiastical pictorialism or religious liberalism; impregnable against the assaults of Satan the Pharisee, or Satan the Sadducee.—Bonar.

IRELAND, says the *Christian Leader*, consumed last year 5,069,028 gallons of spirits, and 78,928,740 gallons of malt liquors; the cost of both being £10,988,683. And yet there are those who say that Ireland is poor! But look at one result of this drinking. The total arrests for drunkenness last year were 92,927. How much more highly would we esteem those who profess to be devoting themselves to the welfare of that country if they would resolutely attack this greatest of all the evils that afflict her!