PULPIT ELOCUTION.

BY WILLIAM MATHEWS, L. L. D.

What is the chief need of the pulpit today? Is it profound scholarship, hair-splitting metaphysical subtlety, rhetorical skill, a firmly accentuated conscience, the moral aroma of character or oratorical skill and power? Of course, divine inspiration is necessary to the truest pulpit power; but inspiration works through human instruments, and of these we believe the one for which there is the most crying want today is that last named.

Till within a few years the art of public speaking has been treated by our theological seminaries with comparative neglect. In many today it receives either no attention, or an attention not at all commensurate with its vital importance. The newly fledged graduate is well versed in ecclesiastical history, and knows all the shades of religious opinion, ancient, mediæval, and modern. He can tell you who Novatus was, and who Novatian. He can tell you to a nicety the difference between the Homoousians and the Homoiousians, Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians, Monophysites and Monothelites, Jansenists and Molinists. He has explored all the transactions of the Councils of Nice, Chalcedon, Trent and Dort; he can give you a minute history of all the controversies that have vexed the peace of the church, recite the sixteen articles of the Pelagian creed, and tell you whether *filioque* is properly in the creed of the Latin church, and what was the precise heresy of Eutyches. But while the graduate has been cramming his head with knowledge, he has never once learned how to make a telling use of that knowledge. In his anxiety to pack his brain with history, Hebrew, and exegesis, he has not learned to communicate the results of his erudition in a fascinating, or at least in an unforbidding way.

Of what use is learning to a preacher if he communicate its results to his hearers in squeaking tones that grate on their ears, or in a drawling sing-song tone that puts them to sleep? What matters it that a sermon has been written with burning tears in the study, if it be struck with coldness of death in the pulpit?—if he who, a few hours before, was alive in every fibre, is now transformed into a marble statue? What matters it that a soldier has a sword of the finest temper, the keenest edge, and the most dazzling finish, if he has never learned the art of thrust and parry,—the art of fence?

A newspaper correspondent, who heard some years ago an address read by Dr. Orville Dewey, wrote: "And such reading! Quiet and unpretentious, but with such appropriate feeling and intense expressiveness! I was not prepared for such a really powerful essay, with so little show of power. I better understand the mightiness of the still, small voice, and recognise an oratory in condensed feeling and subdued tones, greater than the most showy rhetoric and the stormiest bluster."

What a pity it is that we have so few such readers in our pulpits! A prevailing fault of preaching is that it is too declamatory; it needs to be more conversational. There would be a positive gain of power, if the preacher would simply talk to his hearers as a man talks to his friend. Who that ever heard the silver-tongued Wendell Phillips does not remember how great was his surprise on first listening to that incomparable speaker. You were looking for a man who was all-art, all thunder. "Lo! a quiet man glided on the platform, and began talking in a simple, easy, conversational style; presently he made you smile at some happy turn; then he startled you by a rapier-like thrust, then he electrified you by a grand out burst of feeling. You listened, believed applauded. And that was Wendell Phillips. That was also oratory—to produce the greatest effect by the quietest means."

We cannot all be Phillipses; but we can copy his naturalness, earnestness and simplicity; and what a gain would that be to the great majority of preachers! The fault of many is, not that they cannot read Greek or Hebrew, but that they cannot read English. A story is told of an old Scotch woman, who one day gave her grandson the newspaper to read, telling him to read it aloud. The only reading which the boy was accustomed to hear was at the parish kirk, and he began to read in exactly the same tones in which he had heard the minister read. Shocked at the boy's irreverence, the old lady gave him a box on the ear, and exclaimed: "What 'dost thou read the newspapers with the Bible twang?" Oh, that Bible twang! Is there anything which so kills the power of the pulpit? As the best music badly played makes wretched melody, so false and spiritless elocution degrades the finest composition to a level with the worst. On the other hand, by sonorous depth and melodious cadences of voice, even the most trivial sentiments may be invested with a force and fascination that are almost irresistable.

The poet Dryden used to read his own plays so badly as almost to emasculate them, while his friend, Nat Lee, delivered very poor poems with such spirit and taste that a player threw aside his part in despair of acting up to the recital of the author. Hugh Miller tells us that when one of his own compositions was read to him by Dr. Chalmers, he was astonished at its excellence; it produced the effect of the most consummated acting; the author had never dreamed how fine it was before. To what but the absence or presence of the magic of manner,—shall we attribute the fact that some of the ablest and most scholarly courses,—discourses which, when read, seem full of "reason permeated and made red-hot with passion,"—have fallen powerless from the lips of their authors, while a few verses of Scripture, coming from the lips of another man, have acted like an electric shock, "tearing and shattering the heart," to use DeQuincey's words, "with volleying discharges, peal after peal?"

When Whitefield was in this country some of the ablest sermons by his contemporaries were heard with apparent apathy, while Dr. Franklin was held spell-bound by the quaint Methodist preacher, even when his sentiments were the hitest, through the attitude of his gesture and the exquisite modulations of voice which gave its appropriate utterance to every word. So with the preaching of Summerfield. When this accomplished preacher began sweeping the people of Philadelphia on the tide of his eloquence, the clergy of New York came together for deliberation on the phenomenon, and decided to send Dr. McAuley to the former city, to learn the secret of Summerfield's power. When the Doctor returned, they met again to hear his report which was this: "It is not because he says anything new, that he draws and thrills such multitudes; it is not because he says anything that I have not said a hundred times; but because *he says it so much better.*"

Let no one fancy that it detracts from such a preacher's genius, to say that his power lies far less in what he says than in the way he says it. It is saying only that his weapon can be wielded by no other hand than his own. When Mirabeau's friend complained that the National Assembly would not listen to him, that fiery leader asked for his speech, and the next day electrified that body by uttering as his own the words they had refused to hear from another. "The words were the same; the force and the fire that made them thrilling and electric were not his friend's but his own."—*Standard.*

AS THE DEW.

BY WAYLAND HOYT, D. D.

"I will be as the dew unto Israel," the promise runs. And very beautiful the promise is.

For six months each year, there is drought in Palestine. From about the first week in May to the middle of October there falls no drop of rain, nor are there any slow-sailing clouds flinging grateful shadows and tempering a little the sun's fierce beams.

Through all the hours of each steadily recurring day there are only the brazen skies and the pitiless sun-shafts.

From the sun-shafts in the noontime, all flee to shelter, and nature gasps and quivers in the intolerable heat. It were impossible that wheat or blooming flower or fig-tree withstand the scorching. Long before the droughts had ended there would be an end of vegetation were it left unsheltered and to itself.

Behold a beautiful divine benevolence and adaptation!

When the sun goes down, as rapidly as the earth has been from the sun receiving heat, so rapidly does the earth begin to throw off heat into the spaces of radiation. By midnight, and with no clouds wrapping the earth to hinder the radiation of the heat, the earth has grown comparatively cool. Then the west winds begin to blow. They drift over the land from the neighboring Mediterranean Sea. But from the sea they have absorbed an enormous amount of moisture. And as the water-laden winds come into contact with the new cooled land, the comparative coolness gently squeezes the water out of them, and precipitates the water in the form of the finest, most comminuted mist. And so the parched earth and languishing vegetation are refreshed by the abundant moisture, and strength is given for the fierce sun-heats of the succeeding day.

It is more than dew—this moisture, as we know dew. It is pervasive, delicate, drenching night-mist.

Beautiful, is it not? this exquisite adaptation to needs of men and beasts and grain and fruit—the smothering heat to ripen, and then the nightly defense against a too great heat by the hovering, brooding, limitless, refreshing night-mist.

This is the true translation of the promise—"I will be as the *night-mist* unto Israel."

And the spiritual help and refreshment of the promise are evident. God has care for us. God has adapted care for us. God has affluent care for us. Over against our need he stands with supply adjusted and large. The fiery trial will bring some cooling strength from him that we may be able to bear it. No trusting soul shall ever be shriveled into dust. Wrapped up in the very trial God will see to it that there is enabling and compensation. As the fierce sun-beams smite the earth in Palestine, and the heated earth by radiation heats the air, and the heated air ascending makes room for the cooler air weighty with moist to drift over and distribute its refreshment upon the parched land,—as the fierce sun himself is, in the last analysis, the starter of the whole machinery and the initial cause of the drenching and invigorating night-mist, so is the bosom of the hardest trial bourgeoned with blessing. God will not forget the needed night-mist. He will not leave us panting and unrecuperated. Let us trust him. Let us be fearless. Tenderer than the night-mist to the spanging wheat or to the feeble flower is the heart of God to us.—*Standard.*

ABOVE ALL—THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

A vital feature of good Christianity is cross-bearing for the Master. Good preaching means cross-lifting. From the manger of Bethlehem every footstep of Jesus moves straight forward towards the cross of Calvery. His mission to earth converges there. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, the only Gospel that was preached was the Gospel of atoning blood. It was the keynote of Paul's wonderous ministry; whatever else he omitted, he never omitted the "faithful saying." He determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. The only preaching in these days that can silence skepticism, convict sinners, and save the penitent, is that which emphasizes the guilt of the human heart, and points to the only Saviour, the crucified Son of God.

The most imperial preacher of this century was Thomas Chalmers. During the earliest years of his ministry his preaching was mainly ethical; his Gospel was a Gospel of morality. He aimed to reform his hearers from such vices as dishonesty, profanity, falsehood, licentiousness and cruelty. After a few years new light burst upon him, and his ministry became intensely evangelical. His testimony is very remarkable. He declared that while he was simply trying to reform men of their vices, he "never heard of any such results as having been effected. If there were such cases they never came to my knowledge. It was not until the free offer of forgiveness of sin through the atoning blood of Christ was urged upon men that I ever heard of any of these subordinate reformations." He discovered that what men needed was not new habits, but a new heart. The most eloquent preacher of his age had to learn that his pulpit work was ignored by the Holy Spirit as long as he ignored the transcendent truth of redemption by the cross of Jesus Christ.

In these days Christian sociology is pushed to the front, and it is claimed by some that it should be the main theme for the pulpit. Undoubtedly there are many social reforms that ought to be advocated from the pulpit and have their proper place in the activities of the church. But they must never be permitted to crowd Jesus Christ from His throne, or His cross from its central place in the whole scheme of man's reformation and man's redemption. A clean house saves no man who has not a clean heart. Sin lies at the bottom of human suffering and wretchedness; the blood of Jesus Christ alone cleanseth from all sin. Dr. Chalmers' example is strongly in evidence here also. During his magnificent ministry in Glasgow he was the foremost social reformer in the British pulpit, and was summoned more than once before committees of Parliament to give his judgment on reform of the poor laws, the amelioration of the working classes, and similar sociological problems. He always made the civilization of the lapsed masses subordinate to their evangelization, and presented the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the prime factor in their elevation. Chalmers, the most powerful preacher of this century, and Spurgeon, its most popular preacher, were alike in their supreme exaltation of the cross of Christ as the "wisdom and power of God" to man's salvation.

Brethren, thrust nothing in the way that shall obscure or hide the cross of Calvary! A clear, distinct look at Jesus is what every sinner needs to convict him of guilt and bring him to penitence. The preaching that melts hard hearts is Christ-preaching—cross preaching. It wounds and it heals. It kills sin and brings to the penitent sinner a new life. Moses was commanded to do nothing but to lift up the brazen serpent before the bitten and dying multitude in the camp of Israel. We ministers find our foremost duty and our hollest delight in simply lifting up the atoning Lamb of God before the eyes of our congregations. Nothing else can touch and fire the true believer like the vision of his bleeding Lord. Lift up the cross! Let us rally to that as the last hope of a sin-cursed world—as the only breakwater against the floods of error and iniquity. If the cross of Jesus Christ cannot save the world, it is gone! But it will. The Almighty has hung the destiny of our race on that cross; our duty begins and ends in presenting that one beacon of salvation full before the eyes of every immortal soul. Paul glorified only in that. Luther's theology centred around it. The truth by which John Calvin's strongly fortified heart was stormed and carried by the divine Spirit, was the simple, irrestible truth that Jesus Christ died to save sinners. John and Charles Wesley, in the early march of Methodism, kept step to the music of their resounding hymn:

"Exalt the Lamb of God
The sin-atoning Lamb!
Redemption by his blood
Through every land proclaim;
The year of jubilee has come:
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."

—*Theodore L. Cuyler, in The Evangelist.*

A SUNNY THEOLOGY.

I thank God for existence as a moral agent on probation, a racer from a fadeless crown, even though weighted with inherited disabilities. I find there is a power that can change weights into wings. A larger faith in the possibilities of divine grace attested by an "experience that worketh hope" has cured my pessimism, taken the blue spectacles from my eyes, and given to me a sunny theology. I have come to believe that the great purpose of the creation of man in the image of God was the incarnation of his Son, through whom he might reveal himself to Adam and his sinless prosperity, and communicate himself by the Holy Spirit. Thus he would fully develop his own likeness in his sons creation, their concreated freedom from sin becoming moral holiness by their free choice. To have destroyed the sinning pair in Eden would have been a defeat of the Creator's eternal purpose of the incarnation by a malicious marplot. But God triumphed over Satan by adding redemption to the already existing mediation of his Son in both the material and spiritual realms, this mediation being not an expedient to meet an exigency, but an original and essential part of God's moral government.

Hence my chief topic of gratitude is that I was created a man, that my existence was begun and is perpetuated through the mediation of the Son of God. Long ago I rejected Augustine's felix culpa—"Happy the sin which brought the God-man." Rather, blessed be "the Gospel of the creation"—the good news of the transcendent dignity of man conferred in the incarnation, irrespective of Adam's fall, conditionally making us all a royal family to stand at last in the innermost circle of a row of glorified brothers, the blood kindred of the Man who sits on the throne of the universe. This is my strongest reason for thankfulness.—*The Rev. Daniel Steele, D. D.*

THE HEART OF JESUS.

Christ's pity was essential to his service of men. "Looking up to heaven, he sighed, and said, Ephphatha." The sigh had to come before the word of power could come. He was not only impelled to put forth his miraculous power by the cries of the sufferers or of their intercessors, but sometimes by the quick, spontaneous outgoing of his own pity. Before men called he answered, for his own heart anticipated their wants. His pity was no tumultuous idle emotion, but the impulse to action.

The like should be true of all Christians. No help can rightly be rendered unless it comes from a sympathetic heart. Much Christian work is spoiled and made worse than useless by being done in hard, supercilious fashion. Benefits need to be wrapped in softest down of sympathy, or they will cut the hand which receives them. A man may be knocked down by a charitable gift flung at his head like a stone. For all forms of Christian service the law is valid—without sympathy no good will be done. Nor is the converse less needful to remember—that without practical issues no sympathy is worth anything. Not merely is it useless to benefit the sufferers, but it harms the person cherishing it. Every emotion which is allowed to rise and pass without its appropriate action tends to harden the heart. If mercy is twice blessed, lazy compassion is twice cursed.

Christ's sympathy clings to him still and is a permanent attribute of his perpetual and exalted manhood. He bears our griefs on his heart now, and bends over us each with as true a knowledge of our trouble, and as complete a partaking of it, as when on earth he wept by the grave of Lazarus or felt the loneliness of that sonless widow. If our griefs be small, and affecting mainly our material fortunes, we may take heart to believe that since they are great enough to trouble us they are not too small to move his sympathy, when we remember that he himself declared that he "had compassion on the multitude," because they were hungry.—*Dr. Alexander Maclaren.*

LAST PRAYER OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

In the far-away and peaceful island of Samoa, whither he had gone in hopes of arresting the progress of his insidious disease, the devout character of the great poet-novelist shone with a peculiar lustre. He gave a beautiful and helpful example of patient endurance to his fellow-sufferers there and everywhere. On the very day before his death he composed the following exquisite and comprehensive prayer worthy a place in the Ritual:

"We beseech thee, O Lord, to behold us with favor. Folk of many families and nations are gathered together in the peace of this roof; weak men and women subsisting under the cover of thy patience. Be patient still. Suffer us yet a while longer, with our broken of good, with our idle endeavors against evil—suffer us a while longer to endure, and, if it may be, help us to do better.

"Bless to us our extra mercies; and if the day comes when these must be taken, have us play the man under affliction. Be with our friends. Be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest; and if any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching; and when the day returns to us our sun and comforter, call us with morning faces and morning hearts, eager to labor, eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion, and, if the day be marked to sorrow, strong to endure it.

"We thank thee and praise thee; and, in the words of Him to whom this day is sacred, close our oblation."

Prompt People.

Don't live a single hour of your life without doing exactly what is to be done in it, and going straight through it from beginning to end. Work, play, study—whatever it is, take hold at once and finish it up squarely; then to the next thing, without letting any moments drop between. It is wonderful to see how many hours these prompt people contrive to make of a day; it is as if they picked up the moments which the dawdlers lost. And if ever you find yourself where you have so many things pressing upon you that you hardly know how to begin, let me tell you a secret: Take hold of the very first one that comes to hand, and you will find the rest fall into file and follow after, like a company of well-drilled soldiers; and though work may be hard to meet when it charges in a squad, it is easily vanquished if you can bring it into line. You may have often been the anecdote of the man who was asked how he had accomplished so much in his life. "My father taught me," was the reply, "when I had anything to do, to go and do it." There is the secret—the magic word, now!—*The Lutheran.*

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Yours truly,

Toronto. C. L. KILMER.

For Spasmodic Coughs—Minard's Honey Balsam.

GOD'S WAY.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

Our way had been to smooth her upward road,
Easing the pressure of each heavy load;
Never to let her white hand know a soil,
Never her back to feel the ache of toil,
Could we have shielded her from every care,
Kept her forever young and blithe and fair,
And from her body warded every pain,
As from her spirit all distress and strain.
This had been joy of joys, our chosen way,
God led her by a different path, each day.
Sorrow and work and anxious care He gave,
And strife and anguish, till her soul grew brave.
Through weary nights she leaned upon His love,
Through cloudy days she fixed her gaze above.
Her dearest vanished, but in faith and trust
She knew them safe beyond the perished dust.
Refined by suffering, like a little child
She grew; into her Father's face she smiled.
And then, one day of days, an angel came;
In flute notes sweet she heard him breathe her name.
Perhaps from out the rifted heaven she saw
Her mother's face look forth in raptured awe.
We caught the last swift glory in her eyes,
Ere, sleeping here, she woke in paradise.
God's way was best, with reverent lips we say,
God's way is best, and praise our God today.

The *Delineator* for June contains: Summer Fashions, Garments for Sporting and Outdoor Wear For Ladies, Misses and Girls, Conveniences for Aid Etiquette of travelling by Sea and Land, Rose and Violet Culture (Employment Series.) Around the Tea Table, Summer Foods and Dishes, Ohio State University (College Series), Venetian Iron Work (Lace Paper), Kindergarten Papers, Burnt Work Woman as an Artist, Serving and Waiting at Table, Preservation and Renovation, Article on Cleaning Lamps, Shades and Oil Paintings, The Newest Books, A Studio Party, Knitting, Netting, Tatting, Lace Making, etc., etc.

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