

thing like an old castle entrance, and suddenly emerge into light and bloom. A pleasant court, all green and bright; trees, flowers, walks, and arbors. In the centre a Chinese pagoda for the billiard table, and chairs and tables scattered about. A stone walk runs all the way around, into which open the doors of pleasant rooms, wonderfully, tidily comfortable. Here we struck our staff. This is our Alabama. About nine to our chambrea-coucher they bring coffee and rolls; and such coffee as we have never found in Europe,—the *fragrantest* of Mocha. At noon we breakfast, after which commences the regular duty of sight-seeing; so the long afternoons are fully occupied, and at half-past six we dine. There are a number of Americans here and the evenings are social and delightful. And in this loveliest of climes, the last week has brought us only perfect days and glorious calm nights. We are in the land of bananas and oranges, and palms, where the green of vegetation never loses its freshness, and the weather alone seems to build one up, to raise the spirits, as it does the circulation. Such an air! mild as a pure morning, soft—oh! so soft, with a sky more glorious by day and more luminous by night than any ever looked into before,—it is eternally blue, deep, grand and infinite. And yet, just here, while so pleasant to look up, where the air is the purest and the heavens most smiling, one must walk without seeing the earth or those who inhabit it, if he would be spared much pain.—*Nat. Sap.*

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PREACHING IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

How is it that one of the greatest and best endowed churches in the world is comparatively so deficient in pulpit power? Popular eloquence is specially needed in a Protestant Church; yet in a church that has been called the bulwark of Protestantism there are remarkably few ministers who can attract or sway large congregations. Among her 18,000 clergy, the Church can point to no Chalmers or Hall or Spurgeon, hardly even to a man of commanding eloquence or truly apostolic fervour. Her bishops and other dignitaries may be good scholars or respectable divines, but not one of them, except perhaps the Bishop of Oxford, has any great genius for pulpit oratory. Which of them, with all his scholarship and sacred learning, can touch the springs of popular sympathy, and recommend persuasively to the masses the humbling yet elevating doctrines of the cross? Among the benefited "working" clergy, highly excellent men as many of them are, there are also very few orators of any name or mark. With all their University training and State favour, they cannot stand comparison with their Dissenting brethren

in respect of power to sway the popular mind. The nobility and gentry, the higher middle classes, and a large portion of the peasantry, belong, as a matter of course, to the Church of England. Fashion, taste, and ignorance combine to keep multitudes of the highest and lowest class of the people within the pale of the Establishment. But wherever Christian eloquence and zeal have fair play, wherever popular gifts and practical energy are permitted to tell, the Establishment is usually beaten by the Dissenters. The sermons heard in village churches are proverbially weak. Many of them, shamefully sold and bought in the market, are read in a characteristically cold and lifeless manner. These even written by the men that preach them are too often insipidity itself compared with the vigorous though perhaps not very polished effusions that are heard in Dissenting chapels. We wish to make no unjust or invidious comparisons, but we meet everywhere with the most startling contrasts between the vigor of Dissent and the apathy or feebleness of the Church. In how many rural parishes or country towns are the rector and their curates equally stiff and insipid in the pulpit, while the neighboring Dissenting ministers are full of life and energy. Any Sunday in the year in almost any English town, you may hear a curate read most mincingly a sermon of 20 minutes' length, and think his prattle to be very tedious, while in the Wesleyan or Baptist chapel hard by the minister preaches in a style truly fitted to move the popular understanding and heart.

Why do the English clergy as a body so signally fail in a field where they should be specially strong? A great number of them have no vocation for their office, have entered the church from merely private or family reasons, and are by nature quite unfit to preach with any popular power. Then many of them are over-educated men, fine scholars and true gentlemen, but by no means vigorous or effective speakers. Men of merely elegant tastes, who read in their studies or shine in drawing-rooms, are not often the men to conciliate the multitude or to win the working classes to the church. Nor are the parsons who frequent the ballroom or the hunting-field ever likely to excel in that eloquence which should be one of the chief glories of their profession. Laying aside all the non-efficient we find but a limited body of English clergy in any degree distinguished for popular powers. Very many of them are hardworking men, lovers of the poor and friends of education, but few indeed even approach in preaching power Mr. Spurgeon or many other vigorous Dissenting ministers that we might name.

It may be fairly doubted whether the Church of England in any proper sense encourages popular pulpit eloquence. Her idea of a sermon seems radically wrong. A piece of rather genteel commonplace on some church topic or point of practical morality, carefully