

## A REVIEW OF THREE MONTHS.

ZION CHURCH, MONTREAL, 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1883.

I have announced myself to speak to you to-night in review of what has taken place and been discussed during the last three or four months in England. Year by year, after my return from what has become an annual trip, I do this. Generally much criticism of a more or less carping kind follows. Some newspaper writers complain that I secularize the pulpit, and go out of my way to be sensational; but a somewhat prolonged acquaintance with these writers, and an intimate knowledge of their personal, or rather impersonal, judgment, have taught me not to attach much value to their criticisms. For I find that after all, sermons must bear on living subjects—they must have reference to the infinite *now* in which we live and move and have our being. The preacher should be a prophet expounding what is, and predicting what must result, if certain lines are followed as to the guidance of public and private affairs. I do not deny that what is called doctrinal preaching is good in its way; I am sure it is. Even controversial discourses serve a great purpose and do permanent good; but a practical review of men and things as they are is also necessary, that we may have an understanding of the times in which we live. And we, here in this great colony, are bound by affection and interest to regard with careful consideration all those great and varying factors which go to make up the complex life of England. England is yet the nerve centre of the Anglo Saxon race. We are dependent upon her in more ways than we suspect. Her social life is reflective; her profound love of freedom is our noblest heritage; her political institutions are our models; her great men and women of past and present, are our pride and exemplars; we are more than a colony, we are a copy of the mother country. We look to England as the home of intellectual activity. We know a little of the brilliance of the French mind, and the depth and patience of German thinking; but, my judgment may be warped by prejudices, to mind, we must still look to England to take the lead in all social and intellectual affairs. But the question has

*may*