

III.—SYMPATHY AS AN ELEMENT IN PSYCHIC FORCE.

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IN the exercise of the preacher's function no factor needs more careful consideration than his psychic force—none is more apt to be overlooked. Where recognized and its value confessed, it is still, by many, regarded as the special gift of the few, at least in its higher forms. Personal force, magnetism, that certain something which dominates an audience over and above the natural effect of the truth, logically and rhetorically uttered, is found indeed in some men in volume, in others it is small, but in the least favored it is susceptible of cultivation with excellent results.

I desire to point out one of the most valuable elements that go to constitute that composite thing we call psychic force, viz.: sympathy.

This noble attribute is broader than pity, solicitude or condescension. It is a feeling with and for man in the whole range of his life-struggle and experience. It is sensitiveness and susceptibility to human joys and sorrows, to all the humanities, to the hope and aspiration, the fear, sadness, and even weakness of our common nature. A healthy sympathy is, however, more than passive sensitiveness; it is a lively outgoing of the soul in yearning and struggle to blend its activities with other hearts and lives. It is an electric nerve, like the delicate thread spun from the insects' bowels and floating in the air attaches itself easily to the nearest object and becomes an aerial bridge; it projects itself into other natures and establishes an invisible link of intercommunion, a spiritual telegraphy that makes the interpretation of thought and feeling clear and effective and withal welcome.

There are natures cold, unsympathetic, selfish, which quite unfit the man for the true work of the preacher, and there are natures that have grown reserved, undemonstrative and retroactive through injury at some time suffered, and there are other natures which from their environments have found a narrow channel for their affections and interests, however intense, so that literature, theology, criticism, science of some sort has won, fascinated and enchained sympathies which the whole struggling world might otherwise have enjoyed. Such men cannot expect that outflow of psychic force in preaching which comes from a larger, livelier sympathy with men. The Abbe Mulois says, "The people to be influenced for good must be *loved* much." The effective preacher will have heart force, an affluent, genial, frank, confiding nature that yearns to blend itself with others for their help. Many a preacher is far more at home in his study with his library than he is in the great sea of human life around him. His interests are with scholars rather than with society. He is bored when drawn away from his books by the cry of humanity needing help. Some natures grow cynical and pessimistic in their outlook on man in his actual life. These morbid moods are fatal to psychic force in preaching. Philosoph-