

ORIGIN OF THE BAPTISTS.

No distinct congregation, no organized society of Baptists existed at any time during the first 1500 years after Christ. Nor was the peculiar heresy which finally gave rise to the independent existence of the sect, (namely, the doctrine that infants ought not to be baptized,) ever proclaimed by a single individual, till about the commencement of the third century, when one writer suggested his singular opinion and wish, that the baptism of infants, which was then and always had been universally practised in the Church, should be postponed. His heretical notion was not adopted, and died away, so that we hear nothing more of it, till 160 years later, or till after the middle of the fourth century. Then one writer gave it as his opinion, that it would be well to delay the baptizing of infants till they should be about three years old.

THE FIRST TWO PREACHERS OF THE THEORY APPEARED IN THE 12TH CENTURY.

The first glimmerings of the dawn of the Baptist theory occurred in the 12th century, during a period of great darkness, and of wild fanaticism which was venting itself in the Crusades. The elements were all in commotion; Europe was in a ferment; the old Manichee heresy, of which there were some slumbering remains among the Albigenses and others, began to resume its activity; the most absurd and impious doctrines were propagated among the people in the North of Italy, in the South of France, in Switzerland, and in Germany; the state of things gradually grew worse; the minds of multitudes were perverted and prepared for the monstrous birth of that batch of heresies which was ushered into a public and formal existence in and after the 16th century. One of these theories, and a principal one, was that of the Baptists.

The first rise of the theory in the 12th century (the society did not begin to exist till 400 years afterwards) was as follows: From 1126 to 1147 the Albigenses and Waldenses were conspicuous for their heresies. Many among them were Manichees, believing in two gods, a good and an evil, the latter the Creator of the world. They held "the doctrine of Devils, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats;" and they entirely rejected both of the Sacraments, Baptism and the Eucharist. These were the predecessors of the modern Quakers.

Others among them admitted the Baptism of Adults, but rejected that of infants on the ground that those who died in infancy could not be saved, whether baptized or unbaptized, because they could not exercise Faith and Charity; therefore, since they must perish, Baptism would be of no use to them. The preachers of this last doctrine were Peter Bruis and his disciple Henry, after whom their followers were called sometimes Petro-brussians, and sometimes Henricians. Bruis was an immoral Priest who had been expelled from his Church; Henry was an apostate Monk. The former began the heresy in 1126, and after the death of the latter in 1147, it became extinct. These two men were the first preachers against infant Baptism on record.

The great body of the Waldenses, and all their Churches, which, like all the rest in the world, were Episcopal, continued as of old to administer Baptism to infants. The heresy of Bruis and Henry having died with them, was not revived again till the appearance of Munzer and his associates in 1521.

REVIVAL OF THE THEORY.

1521. At this time the Anabaptist theory first began to be preached in Saxony by Munzer and a few others. 1525. These heretics excited an insurrection and civil war, or at least took an active part in it. They were defeated and Munzer was executed. Being dispersed and regarded with jealousy and suspicion, they accomplished nothing during the next nine years—not even effecting the organization of the society.

THE SECT OF BAPTISTS FOUNDED.

1534. Under John Boccold the Baptists captured the city of Munster in Westphalia, and established their Kingdom of New Zion, making Boccold their King, and distinguishing themselves by the most horrid cruelty, licentiousness, and blasphemy. Matthias was their prophet, pretending to great things, and guilty of most impious extravagances. Previous to this year, although, as we have seen, the heresy existed, yet the Baptist society had not been formed as an organized religious sect. Its foundation was laid and its organization effected this year. Here then commences the proper history of the Baptist society. Its founders were John Matthias, a baker, and John Boccold, a journeyman tailor.

After they had held the city upwards of a year, it was retaken from them, their leaders were put to death, and the furious fanatics were once more effectually dispersed. 1535. The Anabaptists under John Geles plotted an insurrection with a view to capture the city of Amsterdam. The plot was defeated, and some of the criminals were slain; but others escaped by sailing to England, where they were the first that ever maintained the heresy. They denied that Christ derived His human nature from His Mother, and considered the Sacraments as of no efficacy. Fourteen of them were afterwards executed.

1536. The heresy was modified and stripped of some of its most odious features, by Menno Simon, a Frieland, from whom the heretics took the name of Menonites or Mianists, which they still bear in Holland.

1549. We again hear something of the foreign Anabaptists resident in England; but there was yet no congregation of them formed in the land. No Englishman had yet been converted to their heresy. They were in all countries looked upon with watchful suspicion, not simply as heretics, but as foes to all civil government, good order, and good morals. At the commencement of the sect they were such, both in theory and in practice; holding, that among Christians civil government was unlawful, that obedience to magistrates was inconsistent with religious liberty, that there ought to be no other King than Christ, that polygamy was lawful, that all things should be had in common, and other notions of a similar fanatical character, utterly subversive of all human society.

But after trying for a few years to live according to their theory, hard experience compelled them to soften down some of the worst features of their system. 1565. We learn that down to this time there were no English Baptists.

1572. A congregation of Dutch Baptists was first discovered in London. They denied infant Baptism; they denied that Christ took the flesh of the Virgin Mary; they maintained that war and oaths were unlawful. No Englishman had yet joined them; but they sowed the seed from which sprang the sect of English Baptists about the middle of the next century.

1620. At this time the Baptists were first publicly known in England as distinct from their German and Dutch predecessors, the Anabaptists. They presented a petition to Parliament. Their doctrines were then anti-calvinistic.

1626. The Baptists in Holland had obtained toleration under the reign of William I., about the end of the 16th century; but they now became firmly established under the reign of Maurice.

1633. The first Particular Baptist society was formed in London.

1639. The first Baptist society in America was established in Providence, Rhode Island. Its founders were Roger Williams, Ezekiel Holliman, William Arnold and nine others: Ezekiel Holliman first immersing Williams, and then Williams in turn immersing Holliman and the other ten. Its first preacher was Roger Williams. He soon however became dissatisfied with the Baptist system, and withdrawing from its fellowship, had the ordinances only in his own household.

1641—1643. During the troubles of the great Rebellion and Cromwell's usurpation in England, the Baptists, who had hitherto made but little progress, began to be somewhat numerous, and to attract more of the public attention.

1643. The Particular Baptists in London published their Confession of Faith.

1660. The Confession of Faith of the General Baptists was first published.

In the same year, on the restoration of Charles II. and the re-establishment of the Church, many of the Baptists abandoned their sect and united with the Church, taking their little children to Baptism.—From this time the number of these sectarians in England dwindled, till

1687. An act of general toleration was passed by the British Parliament, when the Baptists, who had been declining, began to increase.

It were needless to extend our historical view of the sect. We have noted some of the principal outlines of its history, and traced it from its birth in Saxony under the auspices of Storck, Munzer, Hubmeyer, Matthias, and Boccold, to its attempt upon Amsterdam, its reformation in Holland by Menno, its toleration and final establishment in that country, as well as in England and the United States.

THE CHURCH'S TRIALS IN WESTERN NEW-YORK.

(From the Gospel Messenger of Jan. 20th, 1844.)

With this number the XVII volume of the Messenger is completed, and our first thought and duty must be towards that merciful and holy Being, by whose gracious providence it is that we have been sustained through another year of our humble but not unproductive labors. Amidst many fears and tremblings, hours of pain and languor, and seasons of sadness, we have looked, we hope, in lowly and unshaken trust, for the support of Him, who said to one of olden time, "As thy days so shall thy strength be,"—and there has rarely been a time, never in our recollection, when the editor of a religious journal stood more in need of more than human wisdom and guidance in the work of his calling. Never were the elements of human society in more commotion, and never was the Church more furiously threatened, and never more solemnly exhorted to keep close to her Divine Head, than at present. The spirit of the age, the spirit of restlessness, of ambition, of impatience under control, infuses itself into all departments, whether of law and order, or of science, philosophy or religion. The cords that bind the moral elements together are cut asunder without remorse when they appear to lie in the way that seemeth good in a man's own eyes. Systems that have endured the trials and the scrutineers of ages, are repudiated with the flippancy remark, "what care I for antiquity, the systems of other days? they are behind our enlightened age, and I choose to judge for myself." The right of private judgment will not be questioned. But whether sound sense, practical wisdom, true philosophy, and a religious sensibility will not hope and seek to learn from the ages that have gone before, is another concern.

That tendency to uneasiness and agitation so manifestly wrought through many past years, should have more or less produced their effects upon the Church of our love, need be no matter of wonder, though of deep regret, considering how free she generally has been from the convulsions which have distracted many, if not all the denominations of Christians around us. The last year has shown us how eagerly the least agitation of our Communion is watched and encouraged by those who are opposed to our doctrines, discipline, and worship. The effort to convict a large portion of Churchmen of a desire to unite with Roman Catholics, has been put forth with such asperity as want of truth and candor. Romanists, and sectaries of various names have made common cause on this subject, and that for a reason probably not always seen by those who form the league. There has been, as must be plain to an attentive observer, a movement upon the public mind, for some years, towards the Church. Many of the most prominent of the Christian Associations around us, have seen and felt this movement in the retirement of their members and ministers to the Protestant Episcopal Communion, and though doubtless not aware of the fact, they have suffered their feelings to outrun their good sense and candor in the severity of their judgment against us. The Church of Rome has noticed all this, and they ingeniously, if not ingenuously, have helped on and encouraged this idea of our tendency to Popery, for the subjects of his Holiness know full well that if they could break down the popularity and influence of the Protestant Episcopal Church, there would be little difficulty in so scattering the forces of Protestant sectarianism, as to leave them masters of the field.

Without enlarging now upon the particulars we have noticed, it should be considered that useful lessons may be learned from them. And one is the importance of forbearance. It is not always easy to control the temper when sweeping denunciations and acrimonious rebukes are dealt forth towards us—for though the same reproaches have been uttered often and again before, the repetition is very apt to kindle feelings that the Christian should not cherish, and which if on his guard he will not be so likely to indulge. Another lesson which should be learned under these circumstances, is the duty of a more diligent and careful study of the principles, the history and usages of the Church as they are to be traced in her several formularies and through all time back to the Apostolic age, marking those periods when her face was most bright and fair, as well as those more gloomy days, when corruptions overspread her loveliness, and superstition, and error, and falsehood encumbered her path, and darkened her councils.

And again, another use to be made of the treatment we are receiving, is to regard it as an admonition to be more in earnest in the employment of all those means of grace and spiritual advancement with which the Church provides us. As "Our bad neighbours make us early strikers, Which is both healthful and good husbandry," so the unkind reproaches of our accusers should quicken our efforts to improve our hearts and minds in renewed affections and increasing godliness, that they may have no evil things to say of us, while we pursue our way with a more lively faith, and love unforgotten in all godly quietness. With such views and desires as these, our work in the Messenger was commenced seventeen years ago, and such have been our aims all the way. That our work has been well done, free from mistakes, and devoid of all admixtures of human defects and tempers, we by no means suppose, for who is sufficient for these things? but that our object has been the edification of our readers, the promotion of increasing love for the Church as the way of access to the God who made us, the Redeemer who shed his blood for our salvation, most sincerely believe; while we implore the Divine forgiveness for all our errors and faults, and his blessing upon any and every word we may have uttered in harmony with the oracles of his truth, and in correspondence with his Church as she appeared in her purest and brightest days.

In a survey of the past year, with the recollection of numerous causes for gratitude to many friends and supporters for encouraging aids and kind words, we have had much to encounter in losses and disappointments, and with these have been mingled many sorrows over the unhappiness of the Church, as her peace has been threatened and her harmony disturbed. And then we have seen the Missions of the Church, General and Diocesan, greatly perplexed and retarded for want of the liberal support which should be always at hand from a body of people abundant in wealth. If one and all would give their minds and hands to the support of the prominent and important institutions of the Church, and in this spirit employ lay aside and forget the turmoils of party strife and the emotions of personal dislikes, we might soon hope for the blessing of Him who exhorts his people to be at peace among themselves, and to whom the Church directs us to pray, for the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace.

With the Church at large we have had to mourn as we recorded the departure from his high and holy trust, the venerable presiding Bishop. Casting his mantle literally upon the shoulders of his successor in the Episcopate, and in the ripeness of his faith he went to his rest. Other servants of the altar have been called away at a time when human foresight they could not well be spared. Among them, and the first in the Diocese since its complete organization, was the estimable and talented brother, the rector of St. John's Church, Canandaigua, whose decline was rapid and his fall sudden, in the morning of life and before the meridian of his usefulness.

As we have noticed from time to time many circumstances connected with the Church of England and in her wide spread Colonies,—though marking many events indicative of the amazing struggles she is making and the perils to which she is exposed, it is most cheering to observe the energy and pious zeal she is evincing, and the indications afforded of her upward and onward course towards what we humbly believe will prove a more exalted and influential position in the eyes of Christendom than she has ever held.—The assaults she has met from Romanists and dissenters, together with the threats of schism and party acrimony in her own immediate bosom, all overruled, as we firmly believe they will be, by a gracious Providence, will result in renewed and highly blessed exertions for the truth as it is in Jesus, for the honor and permanent expansion of a communion which claims kindred through an unbroken line with the Apostolic Church, and delights to trace and preserve in her Liturgy, her Articles and Offices, the usages and sentiments of primitive Antiquity.

In a day of much agitation and of diverse theories, it is difficult for a weekly journal to avoid more or less attention to the controversies that are raised; but it has been our aim at all times to keep clear of the consequences of controversy in relation to the great points at issue between Churchmen and their opponents, but because long continued discussions seem not well suited to a journal like the Messenger, which finds its way to a large proportion of readers who stand most in need of plain and simple instruction upon the doctrines and worship of the Church. And again, many of the discussions of the present times have appeared to us more like party and personal contests, than the instructive investigations of religious truths.

That our course has satisfied all our readers, especially for the last few months, we are not so unreasonable as to expect. Some would like to have us give on all the points of agitation, everything on both sides, but such a method would very soon destroy any journal not intended to pander to the morbid appetites of a restless generation. On this subject however, we have great satisfaction in stating that in no part of our editorial career have we received so many oral and written demonstrations and assurances of approbation from men of intelligence and high respectability. And from the less cultivated and conspicuous portion of our readers we have received in large numbers, evidences of the continued interest and usefulness of our weekly sheet.

THE PUSEYAN CONTROVERSY.

(From the Church and State Gazette.)

The Puseyan controversy may now be considered as drawing to a close, and the manner in which it has been conducted will remain in the records of the Church as a memorial of the ability, learning, and moderation of the bishops and presbyters of the present day. We consider it to have been a portion of a grand ecclesiastical movement, which arose out of the peculiar state of the religious mind of England, both within and out of the Church. It did not commence with the Tractarians; they were only a part of it. Long before the Tracts for the Times attracted the attention of the public, the clergy had been contending with the difficulties of their position, and every day the struggle appeared more difficult and critical. It is to this intellectual and moral strife that the movement owes its origin. "Puseyism" was only a feature of the movement; and whilst that is passing away, the movement itself is progressing, deep and full, to its consummation. It is, in reality, a war of opinion—a struggle between contending principles; whether there is a Church owing its origin to a divine institution—or whether man, as a religious being, is left to his own resources, and thrown on the wild ocean of doubt and uncertainty? Have the Tractarians decided this question? Long before they commenced their labours it was in agitation, and they have increased the difficulty of its solution. We consider the movement to have begun with the Evangelical clergy. At the period of their rise a religious stupor had seized the public mind, and a death-like apathy brooded over the Church. Mourning over this sad defection, and taking their stand on the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, as expounded in the Articles of the Church, they sounded the trumpet of alarm in the mountain of God. It was at first unheeded, but it blew so loud and long that universal attention was at length excited. The high places of the earth heard and trembled, and the valleys beneath received and prolonged the sound.

The Church was roused from its slumbers, and her temples were filled with multitudes of ardent and holy worshippers. But there was something wanting.—The Clergy had created a sympathy in favour of religion which they knew not how to guide. They did not carry out the system of the Church; perhaps they could not. We bear them witness how intensely they loved the Church; and we are inclined to think that if they had been duly supported—if they had been provided with the means of obtaining the necessary aid in their arduous enterprise, the Church would have been inconceivably benefited by their labours. As it was, they were the foremost to oppose the ironies of sectarianism. They saw and lamented the evils of Dissent; they suggested and adopted various methods to check its alarming progress; concession was tried to its utmost limits, but in vain. Dissent became more obnoxious, and at length, emboldened by the patronage of the State, declared that it would be content with nothing but the downfall of the Church? The Clergy resorted to new methods, they began to assert the fundamental privileges of the Church as a divine institution. Witness their writings in almost every country, especially during the agitation of the Reform Bill. The letters of "Britannicus," in Leicestershire, were prior to and independent of the Tracts of the Times and have since been published under the title of "The Church its Own Witness."

We remember also, with gratitude, the Rev. Mr. Foye's successful exertions in Birmingham, and his bold assertion of the antiquity of the English Church. We might notice other champions who entered the field of controversy besides the writers of the Oxford Tracts. These last were actuated by the same motives, and taking their rise out of the same necessity, it was their purpose to withstand the growing latitudinarianism of the day. But their peculiar temperament urged them too far; and, searching into the past ages of the Church, they carried their reverence for antiquity into an admiration of what, although it might be even termed Catholic, was not Apostolic. They broke away from the moorings of the Church, and lost sight of the rock on which she is anchored, and of the royal banner which she has unfurled as the standard of her authority. "It is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's word written; neither may it expound one place of scripture, that it be repugnant to another." The Tractarians have signally failed in their attempt to re-establish ancient usages and doctrines which the Fathers of the Reformation had solemnly rejected.—Indeed, their extreme opinions have been a serious check to the legitimate movement which preceded them. But we shall not be deterred from following them up, and endeavouring to establish the Church of England as the centre of unity—"the pillar and ground of the truth,"—holding the Apostolic discipline in conjunction with the Apostolic doctrine.

THE CLERGYMAN IN THE PULPIT.

(From the Rev. R. W. Evans's "Bishopric of South.")

And now let us suppose you arrived at the end of this part [the Liturgical Service]. If you have had your heart in it, you will find that heart well fitted indeed for the office of the exposition of the word of God. It will have been humbled by sincere confession, and moreover by the rebuke of its own shortcomings, which is so forcibly conveyed to the short-conscience by the perfect sincerity and the perfect attention required by the effective utterance of the prayers. But it will also have been established in faith, improved in knowledge, furthered in grace. You will now be capable of suitably delivering a message from the most High God, a message of reconciliation, accompanied with promises and threats. And you will not forget that this message is directed also to yourself, as some do who speak as if they were angels and not men; yea, as if they were Christ preaching to the disobedient spirits now in prison. You will preach with all earnestness, and all solemnity; but you will never work yourself up into what is called a rant. For that, if sincere, belongs to a state of mind which is utterly at variance with that not only of the Christian preacher, but of every true Christian. What passage is there in all Scripture, the proper recitation of which admits of it? why then should your sermon? Such extravagancies will, no doubt, attract the attention of the vulgar, and satisfy that vacuity in their minds which requires to be filled up with excitement. But it will repel those who are most capable of sound instruction. They deeply feel the impropriety of all heat and fume, and your shouts will remind them more of the priest of Baal, than of the minister of Christ. Should you ever be transported into such fits, depend upon it that you have either indulged an unevangelical impetuosity of mind, or you are methodical amid your madness, and studying effect. In either case you have not remembered either what you are, or where you are; and in the latter, have been preaching not Christ but yourself; not to a Christian congregation, but to a theatrical audience.

The use of action also by the minister of the Gospel of Christ requires the exercise of good taste and sound discretion. Its limits are obviously narrow; for he must not for a moment allow his manner to be confounded with that of the actor in the theatre, or of the popular haranguer on the hustings, or even of the speaker on the platform of a religious meeting. The opinion of pure antiquity seems to have been against it, unless very moderately used. The Greeks were a very excitable people, and much given to enforce their speaking with action; but the exquisite taste and pure piety of the better days of their Church was grievously offended with the action of Paul of Samosata, who used to strike his thigh, and stamp with his feet. We then, so cold a people as scarcely ever, on common occasions, to employ it, ought to be offended at a much quicker exhibition. That a little of it has a good effect cannot be doubted; it persuades us that the speaker is in earnest, and it fixes the attention which is too apt to wander away from mere words; but if carried beyond a certain limit, it only gratifies and fosters a sensual love of spectacle and desire of excitement in the vulgar, and if tolerated by others, withdraws their attention from the sermon to the man. In any recitation whatever it will be found, I believe, that we least remember to any good effect, those passages which have most excited us by the external apparatus of their delivery. Indeed, we often quarrel with ourselves in our cool moments, for having been so carried away by what now, on calm reflection appears as much as we can remember, turns out to be the most empty part of the whole.

Our own habitual manner, and the nature of the matter before you, must decide this question for you. If your temperament be naturally cold, if your address be naturally quiet and motionless, you had better not attempt action, but endeavour to express your subject by appropriate intonation. In short, when a man has once deeply felt his true position, and according to that provided against his natural defects, so that he may neither manifest a repulsive coldness, which looks too much like indifference, nor exhibit undue warmth, which impresses a suspicion of insincerity, he has only to do as earnestness of heart will prompt him; and if action be natural to him, he will employ it in subjection to the restraint which the sense of the deep solemnity of the occasion imposes.

Earnestness of manner is the main point; and if you assume a tone or gesture which your people know to be natural to you, the impression is by no means favourable; but if you manifest it, even in your voice only, in its natural key, and in accordance with your understood temperament, it will not fail to fix attention, and draw hearts after your words. This part, indeed, which is played by the voice, is the substance of the art of delivery, of which action is but the accident. To this end, your principal aim must be flexibility and distinctness. They are both, in a certain degree, gifts of nature, and more commonly so than the loss of them, through neglect, appears to argue; but they may be recovered by due attention and careful exercise, where they have not been originally utterly denied; and they will grow with the occasion, much faster, for instance, in a large church, than in a small one. Variety is also attained by turning to different parts of the church, and distinctness requires, besides the articulate pronunciation, a pitching of the voice into the more distant and less favoured parts of the building. And here lie the borders of utterance and action.

But even of this mechanical part much will depend upon the sermon. The experienced preacher instinctively constructs his sentences according to the scale of his voice, so that the pauses may agree with the intervals of rest which its easy exertion demands, and the flow of the words may agree with the rise and fall of his natural intonation. In fact, mind, and style, and utterance, are in close connexion. To obtain this end with the greatest success, he will employ as little formal explanation and argumentative a statement as possible; since this must keep his voice in one uniform tone, and deprive it of all its advantages of power of flexibility. Not to say that it should likewise be avoided on higher grounds, which will be stated presently. He is choice also, not only as to the quality, but also as to the quantity of a word which he is going to use. Having to preach to the poor as well as to the rich, he avoids as much as possible the long words of Latin origin; not only because of the unfamiliarity of their meaning to their understandings, but also because of the indistinctness of their sounds to their ears. For both from exposure to the weather, and from scanty experience in listening to a reader or speaker, at least of the higher phrasology of our language, they cannot readily catch the sound of such words, which, having many syllables, and but one among them with a strong accent, come faint and confused upon their ears; still the preacher cannot dispense with all these words, and the proof of good utterance lies in the clear though subdued articulation of the unaccented syllables. This, is, perhaps, a still more rare accomplishment than proper action.

This may seem to be going into trifles; but nothing in all his department is trifling to him who is desirous to execute his duty faithfully. And what, after all, is a duty, but a sum of minute, and therefore apparently trifling, details of well-doing? The miser tells you, that if you look after the pence, the pounds will take care of themselves, and you will grow rich. The same principle holds in growing rich unto any excellency; and the man, who would attain to his full measure of efficiency as a preacher of the Gospel of Christ, must, in the first instance, look well to his words and syllables.

But these are the body. Earnestness is the spirit and life-giving principle, without which the most appropriate delivery will be of little avail. But how can you be earnest without being sincere, and how are you sincere, unless in all blamelessness of conversation you diligently walk the rounds of your parish during the week, like a good shepherd to keep off from your flock the roaring lion that walketh about? So closely connected is your duty in the pulpit with your duty in your daily round, your ministry in the Church with your ministry in the house. If you shall neglect the latter, then, however for a while you may succeed in drawing congregations by enticing words of man's wisdom, yet, in the end, you will be left with a remnant; for you have not won the blessing of God, nor given demonstration of the aid of his Spirit.

And now let us leave these elements, and go on to a higher part of our subject. In arranging your scheme of subjects for the pulpit, in your manner of treating them, in forming your style, your manner of delivery, do not in any way conform to the standard which your congregation shall choose for you, unless it be quite agreeable to your good taste, and sound conscientious judgment. You must seek God's approval, and not men's; you must consider how you appear before Him, and not how before them. Men, and all show before men, must be utterly cast out of sight, and the judgment of God must alone be regarded. The preacher of the Gospel of Christ must never forget that he is the teacher, and therefore the leader, and not the follower, of men. He has nothing to do with their likings or dislikings. Whether in season or out of season, he must press that which his best judgment approves, if he would not be the slave of those to whom God has sent him as a master of instruction.

This is a vital point indeed, in the matter of your sermon. Here lies one of the severest and most scrutinizing trials of your sincerity and courage, and not the less severe because it meets you upon the very entrance of your ministry. And equally trying is popularity and unpopularity. If you shall become immediately popular, then you are encouraged to persevere in the plan with which you have begun; but as you are in your novitiate, and even at the threshold of that, this is likely, from want of experience, to be very imperfect; and thus you will exclude that improvement to which the exertion of your talents, under the grace of God, would have brought you. You ought rather to suspect that you are wrong; for, in the very first place, popularity, when immediate, cannot have been gained by any sterling merit of the preacher. In some cases his admitted qualities have been merely personal; in others, they have been impaired by the perverted judgment of his hearers, who are prejudiced in favour of exclusive stress upon some one particular doctrine, or of a particular style of delivery, or of a peculiar phrasology, or even of particular attitudes. And in the next place, who so unfit to be judges on such an occasion, as ninety-nine out of a hundred of any congregation upon earth? Have they sufficient divine knowledge to be arbiters upon questions of doctrine? Are they sufficiently spiritually minded to be able to discover and appreciate the more inward, more spiritual, more substantial qualities of their preacher? On the contrary, the great majority of your hearers are carnally minded. They like the exclusive preaching of some one doctrine, because it flatters their prejudice, favours their want of comprehension, their ignorance, their narrowness of mind, and affords both to mind and soul a short and royal cut to the desired end. They like merely external advantages in their preacher, from being ill able to judge of any other; and they often even like a peculiarity which is offensive to good taste, from their bad taste, as well as because it seems to denote them as a peculiar congregation and people. And, above all, they like to be taught their own ways, just indirectly enough, so as that they may not be shocked with the open and palpable accommodation to their will, but may enjoy the illusion of a thin spiritual veil thrown over their own carnality. And it is such a spirit as this, that the steward of the truth in Christ is to seek to reconcile.

But suppose that you should find your preaching unpopular at the outset? Are you to be discouraged by the coldness of your reception, and abandoning the rule which you had laid down for yourself in calm and disinterested moments, under knowledge, under taste, under judgment, under prayer, to accommodate yourself to the taste and sentiments of your hearers? Be assured, that if your rule have been thus formed,

your unpopularity will not be lasting; and they who would teach you, will insensibly condescend to be taught by you. Seeking the approval of God, you will be anxious first of all to set forth his truth in all its comprehension of doctrine and practice, laying stress on every point, according to its rank in the scheme of the Gospel. You do not, indeed, put the habits and temper of your congregation out of the question; for, in a certain sense, you must become all things to all men, and have to persuade with kind exhortation, as well as to teach with authority, and to be understood by ignorant and educated alike. But you never give up your better judgment, for if you have indeed sought God's approval, then you would be surrendering God's will. No! nor do you give up your good taste, for if you have sought God's approval, then you would be guilty of irreverence. No plea of expediency, however in the outset it may appear to advance God's cause, must tempt you to make such sacrifices. You are sure of the end if you will but be patient in faith in God.

And the Lord is sometimes pleased to try the faith and patience of his servants, and hides from them the increase of their labours, and lets them sow in tears, that their successors may reap in joy. Working in the foundation, shut up in its narrow trench, they see not, and are not seen, of men. But the builders that come after them are elevated upon their work, before the eyes of the world. How little then, indeed, can you judge of the real extent of the effect of your work, and God may make it less visible, however effective, from the very exercise of his mercy to you. He knows your heart, that it would be too elevated with the feeling of success, and He would chasten its fond vanity, and would remove out of its way the stumbling-blocks which best a showy ministration. Learn then, from seeking the approval of God in your own heart, to be indifferent to man's depreciation, and care not to be rebuked for the means, by people who are blind to the end. If you shall be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, then you will so preach, as not to be discouraged by any worldly accident attendant upon your ministration, and will have so preached, as not to be dismayed or confounded by any of its results. But if you shall be ashamed, whether from unsettled views of doctrine and discipline, or from the flutterings of a faltering conscience, you will have been guided by those whom you ought to guide, and when wider experience and deeper knowledge shall have altered your views, you will either propose them in a manner ill-suited to the frankness and authority of the professed ambassador of God, or run the imminent hazard of losing your popularity.

Begin with God and his truth, and He will continue and further you in it. But if you once cast a look at man, you have forsaken the only true school of the prophets, and being a child of this world, will be unfit to be a steward of the mysteries of the world to come. Unfixed in your principles, how can you but toss your hearers about by every wave and wind of doctrine? How can you rightly divide the word of which you have never sufficiently ascertained the extent or bearing? How shall you distinguish the milk from the strong food, and choose the proper season for each? How shall you be able to give its proper part and proportion, and to lay the due stress upon each? You may exhort, but you will not teach. You may even touch and stir the heart, but you will not be able to guide it, when it has been set in motion. You may create an appetite, but will not be able to supply it with wholesome food.

A NEW CREATURE.

It is observable, that our state of nature and sin is, in Scripture, expressed ordinarily by old age, the natural infirmity; that is, all our natural affections that are born and grow up with us, are called the old man; as if, since Adam's fall, we were decrepit and feeble, and aged as soon as born, as a child begotten by a man in a consumption never comes to the strength of a man, is always weak, and crazy, and puling, hath all the imperfections and corporal infirmities of age before he is out of his infancy. And, according to this ground, the whole analogy of Scripture runs; all that is opposite to the old decrepit state, to the dotage of nature, is new. The new covenant, Mark i. 27. The language of believers, new tongues, Mark xvi. 17. A new commandment, John xiii. 34. A new man, Eph. ii. 15. In sum, the state of grace is expressed by, all is become new, 2 Cor. v. 17. So that old and new as it divides the Bible, the whole state of things, the world; so it doth that to which all these serve, man; every natural man, which hath nothing but nature in him, is an old man, he be ever so young, is full of years, even before he is able to tell them. Adam was a perfect man, when he was but a minute old, and all his children are old even in the cradle, may, even dead with old age, Eph. ii. 5. And then consequently, every spiritual man, which hath something in him that he receiveth from Adam, he that is born from above, John iii. 3, (for it may be so rendered from the original, as well as born again, as our English read it,) he that is by God's Spirit quickened from the old death, Eph. ii. 5, he is, contrary to the former, a new man, a new creature, the old eagle hath cast his beak and is grown young; the man, when old, hath entered the second time into his mother's womb, and is born again; all the grey hairs and wrinkles fall off from time, as the scales from blind Tobit's eyes, and he comes forth a refined, glorious, benevolent, new creature: you would wonder to see the change. So that you find, in general, that the Scripture presumes it, that there is a renovation, a casting away the old coat, a youth and spring again in many men, from the old age and weak bedridden state of nature. Now that you may conceive wherein it consists, how this new man is brought forth in us, by whom it is conceived, and in what womb it is carried, I will require no more of you, than to observe and understand with me, what is meant by the ordinary phrase in our divines, a new principle, or inward principle of life, and that you shall do briefly thus. A man's body is naturally a sluggish, inactive, motionless, heavy thing, not able to stir or move the least animal motion, without a soul to enliven it; without that, it is but a carcase, as you see at death, when the soul is separated from it, it returns to be but a stock or stump of flesh; the soul bestows all life and motion on it, and enables it to perform any work of nature. Again, the body and soul together, considered in relation to somewhat above their power and activity, are as impotent and as motionless as before the body without the soul. Set a man to remove a mountain, and he will leave, perhaps, to obey your command, and he will even do no more towards the displacing of it, than a stone in the street could do; but now let an omnipotent power be annexed to this man, let a supernatural spirit be joined to this soul, and then will it be able to overcome the proudest, stoutest difficulty in nature. You have heard in the Primitive Church of a grain of faith removing mountains; and believe me all miracles are not yet outdated. The work of regeneration, the bestowing of a spiritual life on one dead in trespasses and sins, the making of a carcase walk, the natural old man to spring again, and move spiritually, is as great a miracle as that.—Dr. Hammond

understood temperament, it will not fail to fix attention, and draw hearts after your words. This part, indeed, which is played by the voice, is the substance of the art of delivery, of which action is but the accident. To this end, your principal aim must be flexibility and distinctness. They are both, in a certain degree, gifts of nature, and more commonly so than the loss of them, through neglect, appears to argue; but they may be recovered by due attention and careful exercise, where they have not been originally utterly denied; and they will grow with the occasion, much faster, for instance, in a large church, than in a small one. Variety is also attained by turning to different parts of the church, and distinctness requires, besides the articulate pronunciation, a pitching of the voice into the more distant and less favoured parts of the building. And here lie the borders of utterance and action.

But even of this mechanical part much will depend upon the sermon. The experienced preacher instinctively constructs his sentences according to the scale of his voice, so that the pauses may agree with the intervals of rest which its easy exertion demands, and the flow of the words may agree with the rise and fall of his natural intonation. In fact, mind, and style, and utterance, are in close connexion. To obtain this end with the greatest success, he will employ as little formal explanation and argumentative a statement as possible; since this must keep his voice in one uniform tone, and deprive it of all its advantages of power of flexibility. Not to say that it should likewise be avoided on higher grounds, which will be stated presently. He is choice also, not only as to the quality, but also as to the quantity of a word which he is going to use. Having to preach to the poor as well as to the rich, he avoids as much as possible the long words of Latin origin; not only because of the unfamiliarity of their meaning to their understandings, but also because of the indistinctness of their sounds to their ears. For both from exposure to the weather, and from scanty experience in listening to a reader or speaker, at least of the higher phrasology of our language, they cannot readily catch the sound of such words, which, having many syllables, and but one among them with a strong accent, come faint and confused upon their ears; still the preacher cannot dispense with all these words, and the proof of good utterance lies in the clear though subdued articulation of the unaccented syllables. This, is, perhaps, a still more rare accomplishment than proper action.

This may seem to be going into trifles; but nothing in all his department is trifling to him who is desirous to execute his duty faithfully. And what, after all, is a duty, but a sum of minute, and therefore apparently trifling, details of well-doing? The miser tells you, that if you look after the pence, the pounds will take care of themselves, and you will grow rich. The same principle holds in growing rich unto any