

tain those brethren who had come from a distance, but they were too poor to afford it, for of our congregations may be said what Paul said of the Corinthians. "Not many mighty, not many noble," etc. Our infirmary, which was fortunately empty by the time, was filled up with Sicilian, Genoese and Lombard dignities; it was the best proof that Italy was now a United Kingdom. On the morning of the 28th the proceedings of the Assembly were opened with public worship, conducted by the Rev. M. Prochet, president of the mission board. He took his text in Philipians, iv. 13, and spoke very eloquently and earnestly of Christ as the source of might and of power in our struggle against the world and ourselves. After the service was over, the Rev. E. Comba, professor of Church history, in the Divinity College of Florence, was called to preside over the Conference, and the members of it were soon engaged in the discussion of the reports of the Presbyteries, as well as of the proposals forwarded by them to the General Assembly of the Church.

(Concluded next week.)

YALE COLLEGE HOMILETICS.

MR. EDITOR, A writer, in a recent number of your valuable paper, who seems to know more about Colleges than other people, makes the following statement, "I am anxious to see the Yale College system introduced, and a course of lectures given to our students on the art of preaching by a few of the most vigorous and successful preachers in our church; and we have a good list of such men to draw upon."

This statement is misleading; it is fitted to convey two wrong impressions; the one is that the Yale College system of teaching the art of preaching is by employing vigorous and successful preachers to deliver in succession a series of lectures on the subject; the other is, that this is the best method. I shall endeavour to correct both.

Now it should be known that there is a stated professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology in Yale College. It was never intended that the occasional lecturers were to supersede the professor. Mr. Beecher, the first lecturer, expressly says, when introducing his subject. "The design of this lectureship is not to supersede the instructions given already by the incumbent of the chair of Pastoral Theology, but to intensify one portion of his teachings by bringing in from the field those who are actively engaged in the work of preaching, *that you may derive from them the results of their observation and experience.*" According to Mr. Beecher, then, these occasional lecturers are not to supersede the professors, nor to give systematic instructions in Homiletics, but they are merely to make known the results of their own observation and experience. This statement is further confirmed by the facts that the professor, Dr. Hoppin, not only continued to teach Homiletics as formerly, but also united with the other professors in requesting Mr. Beecher to publish his lectures.

It would clearly not be fair to represent the present complicated method of teaching Homiletics in Yale College as the contrivance of the corporation, or College authorities. There is no evidence that they thought that Dr. Hoppin's systematic teachings needed to be supplemented by miscellaneous lectures, or that they made any effort whatever to erect a lectureship for such a purpose. All they did was merely to accept ten thousand dollars offered by Mr. Henry W. Sage, of New York, for founding a lectureship in the Theological department, on a branch of Pastoral Theology, to be filled from time to time, by a minister of the gospel of any evangelical denomination who has been markedly successful in the special work of the Christian Ministry.

The other thing I wish to shew is that such lectures as those delivered in Yale College are not the best, nor indeed adequate, means of teaching Homiletics.

This must be evident to any one who has studied the lectures that have been delivered. Mr. Beecher is unquestionably a man of great ability, and one who seldom fails to make an impression on the minds of his hearers, no matter what his subject may be. But the student will seek in vain for thorough instruction in Homiletics from his lectures. They range over the wide field of Pastoral Theology; and it is unusually wide at Yale. In his first two volumes I can find only one lecture on Homiletics. These volumes indeed teach many things of great value to the Theo-

logical student, and with marked ability; but Homiletics they do not teach.

Dr. Hall at the very commencement of his lectures says "no one can have so strong a conviction of my inadequacy to this task at the close, as I have at the commencement." One can't fail to appreciate such modesty. If Dr. Hall meant that he was incompetent to deliver such popular lectures on preaching and Pastoral Theology as were expected of him, he unduly depreciated himself; because his lectures are highly creditable to himself, and they seem to reach the ideal of the founder of the lectureship. But, if he meant that he was incompetent to give systematic instruction in Sacred Rhetoric, the attentive reader of his lectures must agree with him. Indeed the doctor himself says further, "all I know on this matter of preaching could be put into one lecture."

Besides, such a method of teaching Sacred Rhetoric proceeds on the principle that it cannot be taught in a scientific manner, and hence all that can be done for students is to teach them to follow the example of eminent preachers, or to profit by the experience of "the most vigorous and successful preachers in our church." Who would think of teaching Logic in such a manner? Rhetoric can be taught scientifically as easily as Logic. We should retrograde greatly, were we to ignore the well ascertained principles of Logic and Rhetoric, kindred arts and sciences, and seek to acquire skill in both simply by imitating eminent reasoners and speakers. Such a procedure would throw us back beyond the age of Aristotle, at least. It is an astounding proposal.

Now, if we are shut up to this primitive and empirical method of teaching, I admit, the most we could do for our students would be to make them imitators of the eminent preachers of our church. Unhappy men! They would have no principles to guide them in the culture and exercise of their own powers; their own individuality would not be respected; they would be as likely to imitate the defects (pardon the word) as the excellencies of our most vigorous and successful preachers, and to end by becoming the miserable caricatures of their models.

Moreover, an important question is, where are we to find the "good list of such men to draw upon?" Mr. Sage evidently did not think that suitable lecturers could be found easily even in the United States. Hence he gave the Corporation of Yale College permission to select from any evangelical denomination. Besides, he did not limit the choice to "vigorous and successful preachers," but he extended it to men "markedly successful in the special work of the ministry." But our Canadian Church, we are led to suppose, is richer in "vigorous and successful preachers" than all American evangelical denominations are in successful ministers.

It is not easy to ascertain who are most successful preachers. "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it." It is much to be feared that many owe their popularity to things which students would not do well to imitate. Some owe their popularity to their own vanity, as they seem to imitate a person of whom we read in the Acts, who "gave out that himself was some great one;" others owe it to their eccentricity; others, to their avowed latitudinarianism in doctrine and polity; others, to their puerile composition and illustrations; others, to indiscriminate newspaper laudation, which, in some mysterious manner, follows them abroad and sustains them at home.

Now, the question is, whether is it better to instruct our students thoroughly and systematically in Sacred Rhetoric, teaching them to analyze, and to apply to the hearts and consciences of men, the precious, powerful, and life-giving truths of God's Word, or to place a "vigorous and successful preacher" of the species referred to, in a position to say to them, "*Throw laborious Homiletical study to the winds, and imitate me!*" This last method seems to some to be the only one by which our students are to be cured of "intolerable and incomprehensible dulness," and "effectually guarded against a prosy, sleepy and spiritless delivery."

ANTI-BOMBAST.

THE PRESBYTERY OF MONTREAL.—This Presbytery held its regular quarterly meeting in St. Paul's church, on Tuesday, 21st inst., at 11 o'clock, Rev. J. Paterson, of St. Andrews, in the chair. There was a large attendance of ministers and elders. The Rev. George Coull, formerly of New Glasgow, N.S., being

present, was invited to sit with the Presbytery as a corresponding member. The Rev. W. Furlong, of Lachute, was appointed moderator of the Presbytery for the next six months. The Rev. R. H. Warden, Convener, submitted the report of the Presbytery's Home Mission Committee for the past quarter. It showed a most encouraging state of matters in the various missions of the Presbytery. A committee was appointed to visit Port Lewis and Laugerie, with a view if possible to unite these two congregations into one pastoral charge. The labours of the Rev. R. Wilson, Presbyterian City Missionary, were referred to in the most commendatory terms, and the Presbytery recorded its entire satisfaction with Mr. Wilson's work. The report of the committee as a whole was adopted. The names of the Rev. James Stewart, of Arundel, and the Rev. Robert Hamilton, of Grenville, were placed on the roll of the Presbytery as members in full standing. A cordial and unanimous call from the congregation of Valleyfield to the Rev. G. Coull was sustained and accepted by Mr. Coull, who was present. The salary promised is \$800 and a free house. The induction was fixed for Thursday, the 6th day of February, at 7 p.m., Rev. D. W. Morrison to preside, Rev. R. H. Warden to preach, and Rev. J. S. Black to address the minister and the people. The Rev. Dr. Jenkins reported that the congregation of Stanley Street church had satisfactorily implemented their pecuniary engagement with their former pastor. A call was laid on the table from Stanley Street church to the Rev. James McCaul, the salary promised being \$1,600 per annum. Dr. Dawson was heard in support of the call, which was sustained by the Presbytery. A letter was read from Mr. McCaul accepting the call, and his induction was fixed for Tuesday, 4th February, at half-past seven o'clock in the evening, the Rev. P. Wright to preach and preside, the Rev. J. Nicholl to address the people, and the Rev. J. Mackie to address the minister. A call was submitted from the Crescent Street congregation in favour of Rev. A. B. Mackay, of Brighton, England. The call, though only moderated in a few days, was signed by 479 persons, and the salary promised was \$4,000 per annum. Principal MacVicar was heard in support of the call, which was sustained by the Presbytery, and ordered to be transmitted to the Presbytery of London, England, and the Rev. Dr. Fraser and Rev. Dr. Willis were appointed to support the call before that Presbytery. The Presbytery adjourned to meet on Wednesday morning. The Presbytery met at ten a.m. on Wednesday. A committee consisting of the Rev. Messrs. Warden (convener), R. Campbell and J. S. Black were appointed to devise and carry out a scheme for the wiping off a debt on the Harrington church, with the understanding that the congregation there met a portion of the amount required. On the motion of the Rev. R. H. Warden, seconded by the Rev. J. Mackie, a standing committee on the statistics and finances of the congregations and stations within the bounds was appointed to report statedly in April and October of each year, and other times if necessary. The committee named by the Presbytery was the following: The Rev. Messrs. Warden (convener), R. Campbell, Mackie, and Messrs. W. Robb, W. Darling, jr., T. Davidson, J. Aikman and W. King. The following resolution, anent the Corpus Christi procession was unanimously adopted. "It having been reported to this Presbytery that the religious services of several of their congregations in the City of Montreal were seriously disturbed by the Corpus Christi procession, preventing as it did many of the members of the said congregations, and in one case a minister, from reaching their places of worship,—also that an arch was erected on St. Catherine street almost opposite the door of the St. John's church (Russell Hall), to the great inconvenience of the people worshipping there,—This Presbytery, desirous of harmony between the various churches of this city and Dominion, hereby protest against any repetition of the offences herein complained of, and trust that the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church in Montreal will in future take such measures as will remove all cause of complaint." The Clerk was instructed to forward a copy of this resolution to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Montreal and the City Clerk. The Rev. J. Nichols was empowered to moderate in a call to a minister at Farnham Centre. A Presbyterian Sabbath-School Committee was appointed, consisting of Rev. Messrs. J. S. Black (Convener), Dr. MacVicar, D. Patterson, P. L. Livingstone, and Messrs. David Morrice, J. L. Morris, and T. Davidson. It