

Christ. The clamour that has been raised in consequence is a pretty good proof that the sermon was needed. Dr. Dods does not depreciate Theology. On the contrary he offers a very good *apologia* for Theologians, but he points out that the final end of all preaching, of all Theology, is to bring us to God, and that the great question to be asked concerning every man is not, what does he believe? but what is his character? Even though professedly a Unitarian, does he "practically make Christ his God?" The misunderstanding of the sermon is really very singular. Noisy critics declare that the doctrines of the Divinity, Atonement and Resurrection of Christ are represented by the writer to be unimportant. This is not criticism. In view of Dr. Dods' past record, it is not common sense. Considering that he belongs to the same church as his accusers, it is not brotherly, but it is in perfect accord with the mission, the spirit and the methods of heresy-hunters. Their mission is not to call sinners into the church, but to drive saints out of it, and their spirits and methods are the same to-day as eighteen centuries ago, when they kept, like sleuth hounds, close on the track of that great heretic Paul.

LITERATURE.

LECTURE ON BROWNING

AT TRINITY COLLEGE, TORONTO, BY PROF. CAPPON.

(Continued.)

IN the poem of the Grammarian's Funeral some disciples are supposed to be carrying the dead body of their master, the Grammarian, to its grave at the top of a mountain whose sides, as is frequently the case in Italy, are occupied by a city. As they march along with their burden one of the disciples tells the story of his master's life in a kind of chant. A characteristically simple yet pregnant subject; for notice that the dead man was a grammarian in the great age of grammarians, shortly after the Revival of Learning in Europe, an age when the grammarian was a pioneer in the path of culture, and the names of whose great grammarians, Stephens, Scaligers, Vallas remain like landmarks in the history of letters. Although from one point of view, then, the grammarian's labours on the Greek particles and so forth may have become comparatively insignificant in the altered conditions of these times of ours, yet Browning by making his grammarian of that earlier epoch has got subtle associations of greatness for his subject. There is a fine appeal here as there is so often in Browning's work to the historic sense.

The distinction of the dead grammarian's character, of that refined, scholarly, secluded life spent in self-sacrificing study, remote from vulgar joys and pleasures, is accentuated by the fact that he belongs to the grand type of his age. Learning was then the privilege of the few, and we must recognize an appropriate tincture of haughtiness towards the unlettered crowd, the *vulgus profanum*, a spice of esoteric enthusiasm in the Renaissance scholar, as he sings the dirge of his dead master:

Let us begin and carry up this corpse
Singing together

Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes,
Each in its tether
Sleeping safe in the bosom of the plain,
Cared for till cock-crow.

That seems a care'less style; it certainly pays no regard to what treatises on Rhetoric call "propriety," "the vulgar thorpes or villages each in its tether"; but careless as it seems to be it is exquisitely suggestive and manages to express very fully and with no waste of words the whole coil of common worldly cares, all lying quiet there in the early dawn, "cared for till cock-crow," the parish constable as well as higher agencies duly in charge of it. All that was so far away from *his* life; therefore higher than ever, with a still stronger note of defiance for the commonplace and vulgar does the discipline lift his voice:

Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop;
Seek we sepulture
On a tall mountain, cited to the top,
Crowded with culture.

Thither our path lies: wind we up the heights;
Wait ye the warning?

Our low life was the level's and the night's
He's for the morning.

Then to localize and give vitality to our conception of the scene the poet throws in some words of direction from the leading disciple to his comrades:

Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head
'Ware the beholders
This is our master, famous, calm and dead,
Borne on our shoulders.

That is the high prelude strain, so to speak, of the chant. Then follows in rapid general outline a masterly sketch of a life, and a great life, that ebbed away half unconsciously in days and nights of eager research. And first he had been no meanly moulded man like the little bald tinker in Plato's Republic, who had taken to philosophy to give himself dignity and importance.

He was a man born with thy face and throat,
Lyric Apollo.

Then the long struggle by which fame is solidly founded and slowly built up, the man forgetting meanwhile, in the ardour of pursuit, how the years were passing:

Long he lived nameless; how should spring take note
Winter would follow?

Till lo, the little touch and youth was gone!

He knows it, and he knows the world's scornful estimate of his obscure, narrow life. Worse than that he recognizes that there is a loss, that there has flowed past him a current of life at which he has not so much as wet his lips. No matter! One sad retrospective glance at all that lies behind him and he presses onward—

Cramped and diminished,
Moaned he, "new measures, other feet anon
My dance is finished!"

Here another dramatic aside interrupts the chant, and we begin to see the symbolic character of this ascent to the mountain top:

No, that's the world's way (keep the mountain side)
Make for the city.

Then the main chord again. He had seen Time's signal and knew that if he was to enjoy life he must soon begin; but the other instinct is strong in him; he would learn what life was, how to live, before living: