

THE
PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY
AND
PRINCETON REVIEW.

NEW SERIES, NO. 13.—JANUARY, 1875.

ART. I.—PREACHING TO THE CONSCIENCE.

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HUGH MILLER in his "Schools and Schoolmasters" tells of a certain Scotch stone-cutter, Donald Fraser by name, famed the country through for his astonishing feats in the line of his trade. Two or three times as much work as from any of those who wrought by his side, and equally well done, would come from under his hand in a day. And the explanation the narrator finds is "an extraordinary capacity which the man possessed for conceiving the finished work within the rough material, so that he cuts upon the true figure at once, avoiding the indirect approaches, and the endless repetitions of work common to others." A distinguished American author (Prof. Shedd, *Hist. of Doctrines*, vol. 1, p. 5,) relates a similar story of Michael Angelo, and illustrates by it the advantage of method in any pursuit. "Such is the bold, yet safe power, of a mind that works by an idea, and methodically." Even so. To know how to work is the secret of success. We see it in every branch of human industry; among all the trades and the learned professions: in the case at once of artist and artisan; in the highest departments of mental effort, and in the modest forms of manual labor. Herein precisely lies the difference between skilled and unskilled talent. Only the man of method is master in his calling.

And of nothing is this more true than of labor in the gospel ministry. The preacher has his work before him, a work for souls; the thing is to find out just how to accomplish it; just how to approach the soul which he would benefit; just what kind of

ART. VIII.—ENTHUSIASM IN SACRED ORATORY.

By Rev. HERRICK JOHNSON, D.D., Professor in Auburn Theological Seminary.

IF eloquence is the art of determining the will, sacred eloquence is the art of determining the will God-ward. Persuasion is its proper function and distinguishing characteristic—persuasion to a divine life and to growth upward in that life. The speech of the pulpit that does not have this always in view, is not preaching. It may be commentary, exegesis, instruction; it may be philosophy, poetry, history; it may be the play of imagination, the work of reason, the unfolding of truth, but it is not preaching. True preaching will be instructive, as a matter of course. For truth must be unfolded. Mere hortatory address will not answer. To teach is vital. It is the preacher's business to make his art exhibitivè of truth and moral beauty; but instruction and pleasure are not his end. The moment they become that, sacred discourse degenerates to ordinary authorship, and the art of preparing and delivering sermons becomes like any other art contributing to human pleasure and knowledge. Preaching is teaching, but oratorical teaching, looking always to something beyond mere instruction. Preaching is an art, but an art that aims at kindling emotion *only to move the will* and thus secure the doing of the will of God. Studies that furnish mental discipline to the preacher, that open up sources of knowledge and supply him with materials for his sacred art, that better the fibre of his brain and widen the sweep of his thought, and systematize the truths of God, and unlock the secrets of the dead languages of Scripture, are studies deserving and demanding prominent place in preparation for the ministry. We would not be understood as disparaging these studies, or as reflecting upon any possible intellectual acquisition that may be made by those who preach or are preparing to preach, in magnifying the art for which these are a preparation.

We would have the antecedent and concurrent discipline of every candidate for the ministry as severe and thorough as the best curriculum of college and seminary can make it. Let the deep things of God in his word and works have the profoundest research. Let history, sacred or secular, be compelled to yield

up its vast stores of fact for illustration and confirmation of the truth. Let every herald of salvation be armed with the most familiar knowledge of the original languages, that he may readily reach and reveal their secrets, and give the very mind of the spirit in his scriptural exegesis. And let him be fully acquainted with the science of hermeneutics, that he may make no mistakes in "giving the sense" of the God-breathed words which should be the foundation and substance of all pulpit discourse. All this is vital to the most effective ministry. About as well might an army go to war without powder and ball, and shot and shell, and musketry and artillery, as for preachers to go to their sacred calling without this equipment for their toil. And more than this—there are fields of philosophy, and poetry, and science, and art whose treasures should be searched for and found and possessed by God's heralds of salvation, so that all the riches of all knowledges should be made to pay tribute to the gospel of Christ, in explaining, illustrating and enforcing its grand truths. What Coleridge said of the great divines of the 17th century, it should be possible to say of those who preach to-day: "They were not ashamed of the learned discipline to which they had submitted their minds under Aristotle and Tully, but brought the purified products as sacrificial gifts to Christ. They baptized the logic and manly rhetoric of ancient Greece, they made incursions into every province of learning, and returned laden with the choicest plunder; the scheme of the philosopher, the narrative of the historian, the vision of the poet, were all rendered subservient to the one predominant object of their researches; the gold of idolatrous shrines was transmuted into a purer ore by their spiritual alchemy." When learning is thus consecrated, we cannot have too much of ripe culture and erudition nor too many of the gifts of scholarship, as equipment for the ministerial calling. But clearly, after all, this, and all else beside that we have named, is only equipment. Of incalculable value as it is, upon which scarcely too high an estimate can be placed, it is only furnishing the materials with which the great work of preaching is to be prosecuted. It is not the *art of preaching* any more than parks of artillery, troops of horse and ranks of thinking bayonets and living men, are the *art of war*. The art of preaching differs from linguistic attainment, and theological acquisition, and historical knowledge, just as

the art of war differs from the materials of war, or as the art of painting differs from the pencils, pigments and canvas of the painter. Now it is no disparagement to an army to say that with all its men and munitions, it cannot dispense with the art of war—with its thorough study and complete mastery. So it is no disparagement to the other studies of the preacher to say, that they are all preparatory and subservient to the study of homiletics and sacred rhetoric, or the art of preaching. By this study is improved and largely determined his method of preparing and presenting truth. And upon his method of preparing and presenting truth will largely depend his ministerial effectiveness and pulpit power. And *power is the attribute crowning all a minister's accomplishments.* We say knowledge is power. We mean, or ought to mean, wisdom—the ability to use knowledge—to put it to most effective service. What were an army if the general in command were not wise to handle the vast force and hurl it at the foe. A preacher may be a master in theology yet a dullard at God's great work of preaching. He may know church history from Abraham to Bishop Cummins. He may have the root of every pivotal Greek and Hebrew scripture word at his finger tips; yet unless he understands the art of discourse so as to bring his linguistic, historic and theologic lore to bear with the power of eloquent and effective speech on men's hearts, it will do about as little execution as the Pope's bull against the comet. The preacher's stores of knowledge will be as the cannon and shot and powder without the flash of fire.

Sacred and high above every other art therefore, is the art of preaching, or the preparation and delivery of sermons. Dealing with the deep things of God and of the human soul, with infinite aims and elements of everlastingness, it should be studied profoundly, with a lofty and sustained enthusiasm; and its pursuit and practice should call out the best there is in every young man's soul who gives himself to the ministry. The need of our time is just here. The art of putting things by pen and tongue gets no such time and study as it deserves. There is no serious lack of theological learning in our modern pulpits. There is reasonable familiarity with the historic past of Christianity. The Hebrew and the Greek are sufficiently at the command of the preachers of our day to ensure a fair interpretation of the original Scriptures. But great sermonizers—men who not only

have something to say but who know how to say it—men with an artistic passion for putting truth in the most effective, logical and rhetorical forms—men with downright and glowing enthusiasm in the construction and delivery of sacred discourse—surely, we all know they do not go in crowds. Thoroughly enthusiastic homiletes, stirred with a great passion for the single art of preaching, going to the weekly work of making and delivering sermons as if with a fire in the bones, are seldom seen. You can find men enough to give you sound doctrine, men enough to give you the exact and delicate shades of meaning of the original text; but they are lamentably few who seem aroused and all aglow as they write and preach. Not *what* to preach, but *how* to preach, is the commanding question. How to unfold and press home the truths of God so as to arouse men's consciences and storm men's hearts? What the pulpit needs is enthusiasm—a holy, burning enthusiasm in the study and practice of the divine art of preaching. The mischievous and shameful talk we have had in the religious press about “dead weights” and “useless lumber” and “ne'er-do-wells” in the ministry would have been without even its meagre justification if the students in our seminaries had given themselves with their whole hearts to homiletic discipline and the homiletic art. Now to be stirred with a true passion for this art it is requisite that there be a realization of its intrinsic dignity. The vocation will be tamely pursued that does not impress the one pursuing it with its nobleness and worth. The poet thinks no other art like his. So too the painter and the sculptor. They come to their canvas or marble all aglow, with an enthusiasm that burns within them. They are in love with their art. They pursue it with a kind of passion. They think it divine. And the canvas and the marble catch their spirit and glow and breathe and speak under their touch. So, but with a loftier enthusiasm and more absorbing earnestness, should the preacher pursue his art. He cannot fail of thus pursuing it, and he cannot fail, therefore, of power and success if, having been called of God to it, he grasp those great and mighty ideas which stand indissolubly connected with the work of preaching and which uplift and glorify it as the art of arts.

Among the chief dignities and glories of preaching that are fitted to rouse enthusiasm for the sacred art, are its supreme

end, its subject matter, its ruling spirit, its unearthly sanctions, and its coöperating agent.

1. *Its supreme end.* Perfect manhood in Christ Jesus. The preacher's work is soul building. He constructs a sermon that he may reconstruct a man. The preaching that does not always have this conspicuously in view is not the preaching bidden of God. In no true sense of the word is it preaching at all. It has degenerated into secular speech. Sermons should be made to save men in the broad, deep-meaning sense of salvation; to reach them, touch their spirits, convert them not only, but to go on changing and transforming them and building them up into Christ until they attain unto the measure of the stature of his fullness. The ministry is not a temporary institution, nor is preaching a man-invented or man-appointed instrumentality. It has been ordained of God and is to continue until the church has reached the goal of its high calling; until all God's elect become perfect men, attain to complete conformity to Christ. Perfection is the end; perfect manhood. Christ gave himself for the church that he might present it to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. For the consummation of this purpose, in order to secure the embodiment of this great redemptive thought, God calls men to the ministry, to preach the preaching he bids them—or as the Apostle phrases it: For the sake of perfecting the saints Christ appoints evangelists, pastors and teachers to the work of the ministry, to the edification of his body; or as the Confession of Faith says: For the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life to the end of the world. This is the supreme aim of all preaching; to bring men to Jesus, to put them in love with the Lord Christ, to increase the blessedness and deepen the intimacy of this divine affection and fellowship, to transform and beautify them and build them up, until by a mysterious and divine assimilation they are made altogether like Christ. Every sermon should be planned and filled out and preached solely with a view to this reconstruction of men's souls; not to impart knowledge for its own sake, but to impart such knowledge as shall mould and build right characters; not to vindicate truth for the mere vindication of it, but that the truth thus vindicated may sanctify men and make them free. The preacher must beware of making a sermon with the sermon only in view. It is not the sermons a

man makes but the work they do. They are a means, not an end. Woe to the man whose end is a fine sermon. It may be brilliant, scholarly, logical and charged with the eternal verities of God's gospel, and God may use it; but he will curse the blessing to the preacher's soul. Let no word of ours by which we would lift the art of preaching immeasurably away from and above all other arts convey the impression that we think young men on their way to the ministry should cultivate the homiletic bias and become enthusiastic and effective homiletes for the sake of the sermons they may preach.

Surely the world's great orators did not have great orations in view but living men when they prepared their immortal speech. And Raphael was not intent on a magnificent picture so much as on a lofty ideal that should stir and uplift human hearts when he painted the Sixtine Madonna. And how false, frivolous, sterile and selfish must be the inspiration of the preacher, and how tempted and overborne of the devil must he be who deliberately sets about to prepare sermons as such, with no reference to the work they are to do. He must beware of an idolatry of sermons, fine sermons, show sermons, great sermons. Sermons are tools. Nevertheless, what work they do! And therefore what tools they ought to be! How fitted to the needs and conditions the pliant and yet resistant, and sometimes defiant, qualities of that mysterious, subtle, spiritual element upon which and in which sermons are to do their work—the spirit of man. Unlike the secular discourse which aims at influencing for a particular measure—to secure a vote, a verdict, a present impression, or an elevation of taste or judgment—sacred discourse strikes at the very center and soul of character, to change its inmost principles.

This supreme aim, perfect manhood, dignifies and ennobles preaching and gives to the art of sermonizing transcendent importance. Let it be kept steadily before the mind, let it thoroughly possess the preacher, and it cannot fail to stir the blood and rouse the heart to enthusiasm in homiletic toil.

II. A second consideration that ought to stimulate and quicken all the activities of the preacher is the *subject matter* of preaching. The truth he uses is the truth of God, the word spoken by Apostle and Prophet and Jesus; the word, especially that had living personal embodiment and was made flesh; the word that

was with God and that was itself God. And this is comprehensive, of course, of all those great ideas which relate to God and the soul and which in their substance and inspiration are divine. God's topics they are, revelations of his will, embodiments of his wisdom and power and grace. Behind them and in them is a life. "The words I speak unto you," said Jesus, "they are spirit and they are life." "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ" is Paul's earnest avowal, "for it is the power of God." Men are not commonly ashamed of power. They grow enthusiastic in its presence and use. The theme that is vast in its reach, the subject-matter that sweeps heavenward and hell-ward until it brings two eternities within its scope, that includes the illimitable need of man and the illimitable sufficiency of God, that stretches back to the fall, and embraces sin and its curse, death, immortality, duty, redemption—has an abiding and overmastering interest. Where is the sublime scheme of morals, or the grandly built philosophic system, or the profound political economy, or the intricate legal code, that can approach our peerless gospel in the themes it furnishes for inspiration and possibilities of power! This subject matter is placed in the hand of the preacher. It is this alone that makes the sacred discourse. Preaching therefore, brings to bear upon the human will the contents of God's word, the divine will. Reasons natural, social, ethical, political, philanthropic, have no such power over men as a "Thus saith the Lord." The reasonings of a subtle philosophy, the pomp of a liturgical drama, the excitement of unique themes wide of the gospel message, may attract for awhile, but because men are men, the only permanent hold upon them will be possessed by him who faithfully uses the word of God, which is "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword."

"That which is essential, which all the discourses of the Bible have in common, and which our sermons should have in common with them, is that they proclaim the will of God." Doing this out of and according to the Scriptures is preaching.

And now when we consider that, according to our evangelical Protestant Faith, "the whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory and man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture," and

when we consider "the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole, and the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies and the entire perfection thereof," we can hardly conceive it possible that any mind can grasp all this, accept it, believe it, go forth to preach in the full and ever-present conviction of it and be anything else or less than an original, stirring and enthusiastic homilete, going to the weekly work of preparing fresh sermons, of opening up texts of Scripture, and making new discoveries of truth, and dipping into the deep things of God, with a relish, an ardor, a devotion, amounting to a passion.

If the young men going forth from our seminaries would be fresh and commanding, and have their speech vivid and electrical, they must thoroughly grasp this idea of the divineness and illimitableness of the subject matter of all gospel preaching. They must bring to mind until they are possessed, saturated with them, "the ideas and doctrines which hang like a constellation in these heavens." They must breathe in and out of every pore of their souls the biblical spirit, and anchor themselves at once in the unchangeable purpose that all their pulpit discourse is to be imbued with this spirit. And as they grasp the vast themes in exegesis, more and more will they be filled with a devout enthusiasm in homiletic toil—or in the divine art of preaching.

III. A third distinctive characteristic of preaching is its *ruling spirit*. It is preëminently the spirit of love, which is the spirit of Christ; an abounding, absorbing love for the souls of men. The preacher must have faith, but it is a faith "that worketh by love." Heralding God's truth he is to be heard "speaking the truth in love." His earnestness will be wanting its best inspiration, if it be not by the constraining power of love. And his work will be true and Christ-like as it is bathed and flooded with a supreme affection. Love is the commanding commandment, the gift of gifts, with the preacher. It is true of no other vocation as it is of this. And just as it has prevailed in this, has preaching been characterized by a mighty effectiveness.

It was one secret of apostolic power. Paul is our model here. Paul the peerless reasoner, bold and confident in his handling of

the deep things of God, the gifted and mighty mental athlete, the once proud and self-sufficient Pharisee. We know many are accustomed to look upon this apostle as intensely fond of the austerities of rigid and relentless doctrine, and as of choice the enthusiastic champion of the harder and severer side of truth. The truth is, however, no man of all the apostles felt more deeply, loved more devotedly, gave himself to Christ and his church and souls with a greater passion of affection, than Paul. His love sometimes glows and burns in his epistles until everything else seems consumed in the fiery flood of it. It now bursts forth in very riot of tumultuous passion, and then calms itself in a deep of almost infinite tenderness. He warned men night and day, but he warned them with tears like his master. He was swept out to men and into them as by a passion for their welfare. He poured out such treasures of desire, such passionate and comprehensive stores of affection, such deep, strong, tender, tearful, self-surrendering love as never else found expression in human language. Whether he wrote to Ephesus or Colosse, or Thessalonica or Philippi or Rome, it was all one way; his love, his yearning affection and tender, tearful sympathy broke out everywhere. Being affectionately desirous of men he was willing to have imparted unto them not the gospel of God only, but also his own soul, because they were dear unto him. "I was with you in weakness and fear and much trembling" he says. . . . "With all humility of mind and many tears," "I seek not yours, but you"—"And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." Think of the tears this great man shed, think of the prayers he poured out of his yearning heart, richer and profounder than his arguments, think of his joy in being a fool for Christ's sake, of his willingness to be all things to all men that he might win some. Love and sympathy bent him to every need of human nature. Mr. Beecher thus paraphrases Paul's noble avowal: "I know how to fit myself to every sinuosity and rugosity of every single disposition with which I have to deal: you cannot find me a man so deep or so high, so blunt or so sharp, but I would take the shape of that man's disposition in order to come into sympathy with him, if by so doing I could lift him into a higher and a nobler plane of life."

"Truthing it in love." This is the thing to do. This is the

ruling spirit in all true preaching; the distinctive quality that ought to characterize every Christian minister. It is the reaching out of the heart to bless others whether they be lovely or unlovely, with a yearning sympathy and desire for their good. It is Jesus coming unto his own when he knew his own would receive him not—pouring into the world's heart the great and mighty passion of sympathizing and suffering love that he might glorify its baseness and change its enmity to friendship.

Tempered by an affectionate tenderness, then, should all preaching be to reach and move men. It is true this rare God-like quality is a growth. Its dominance in the soul must come by cultivation. But it belongs to preaching as fragrance to the violet, as beauty to the rainbow, as guilelessness to Jesus. Cold and hard and repellant is the preaching without it. God pity the students of his mysteries who go to their pulpits with little or none of the glow of this love in their hearts, to make them affectionate heralds. They can preach the hard things of Revelation, the severest truths of God, with acceptance and power, with this ruling spirit in them, dominating in their speech, glorifying their calling, bathing the very terrors of the Lord with a tearful pathos. But they will be as those who beat the air if they have it not.

Is it asked how this spirit of love may be developed and increased until it possesses the preacher? We can only say, as Paul said to the Philippians, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things." Be wholly and absorbingly given to them. Above all, let the cross and passion of the Son of God have frequent and devout meditation. Nothing will so wake and stir and feed this divine and holy love, until it comes to complete supremacy and overmastering power in the soul. "The immediate intuition of the atonement arms the preacher with a wonderful tenderness and power of entreaty. Other doctrines are powerful but this carries him beyond himself and fills him with a deathless affection for God and the soul of man."

IV. A fourth consideration that should fire the soul in homiletic toil, is the *unearthly sanctions of preaching*. No other speech of men has God behind it. No other art looks to such stupendous effects. Every other work and word is finite. Here is the

infinite. Every other art has to do with time, this has to do directly with the two eternities and goes far to decide them for every soul it touches. What other theme is there that men dare carry on their lips to other men and say, "This is a savor of everlasting life, or of everlasting death to you. He that believeth shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned?"

How these tremendous alternatives, that are pressed upon men in the gospel message, uplift preaching! How these unearthly sanctions make the preparation and delivery of sacred discourse the transcendent work of this world. And if it be true that the eternal destinies of deathless souls are changed by the truth they hear, with what care, with what study, with what adaptation, with what lofty inspiration, with what chaste and holy but mighty enthusiasm should the truth be prepared. Let a preacher once get possessed with the idea of the unearthly sanction of his art as he pursues it in working on living souls, and it will be his constant, joyful aim, his prayerful and passionate purpose, his unwearying study, with all the ardor and energy of his nature to make every sermon take on the highest homiletic excellence so that it shall be best adapted to reach and save.

It is no answer to all this to say that it is not the form of the truth, the method of its presentation, but the Spirit of God, that renews men. It is true that the first cause and the solely efficient one is the Holy Ghost. But the instrumental cause is the truth. It has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save men. But not by foolish preaching. Adaptation is just as much a necessity with secondary and instrumental causes as with primary and efficient. There is a method of constructing sermons and of presenting truth, adapted to convince men and to lead to their conversion. There is a method not so adapted. We all know there is a vast difference in the way in which souls are nourished and developed after they are born to God, and which difference is the result of the difference in their pastors' modes of sermonizing. Distinctness, vividness, plainness, orderly arrangement, force—these and other qualities all have to do with the saving effect of truth on the heart. God is sovereign and he can use the unlikeliest form and method, as he sometimes does. But he is not constantly violating the laws of adaptation which he has fixed in the human mind, and he ordinarily works by appropriate means and methods adjusted to established men-

tal laws, and fitted to work through them and by them on the conscience and heart. Mr. Beecher says "to quote texts to men is good for some purposes, but that is not preaching; if it were then you would better read the Bible altogether without notes or comment." No! a text is to be used, to be rived to its very heart, to be taken into the preacher's soul, to be brooded over until the preacher has possessed himself with the divine idea, and then that idea is to be rhetorically developed, confirmed, illustrated and enforced. And if he have before him and in him the conviction and consciousness of the high and eternal sanctions of his message, that differences as wide as heaven and hell may be made with men by his discourse, how can he fail of giving his best and most enthusiastic energies to homiletic discipline and the homiletic art, by which the truth may be best fitted to men's spiritual need.

V. A fifth consideration that gives unequalled dignity and glory to preaching is *its co-operating agent*. Everything in the structure of a sermon may indeed be referable to human powers. But if it be a genuine spiritual discourse it has come from natural powers only as "enlightened, sustained and made adequate to the result by the Holy Ghost." The things of the Spirit of God are spiritually discerned—by the help of the Spirit. And these constitute the material of preaching. True preaching is that in which the Spirit has part. It does not have that infallible superintendence which holy men of old had when they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; but the mind and life of the divine Spirit are in it as a permeating and effective force. Paul's preaching was not in the enticing words of man's wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and therefore of power. This is the substantive difference between preaching and all eloquence that is simply born of the natural powers of man.

A man may be "set apart" to the ministry, his theme may be sacred, his pulpit discourse may be eloquent. Such discourse may have logical arrangement, clear and vivid description, direct and forcible appeal, it may contain the most sacred verities of the gospel; but if not in affinity with the Holy Spirit, if not from his influence and inspiration, it is unspiritual and therefore not true preaching. Even the commonest operation of spiritual life, such as prayer and the reading of God's word, is possible only as the

Spirit has part in it. We read the letter only, without him to aid in the reading, and prayer is empty and vain speech unless he help our infirmity and teach us how to pray. But this high and holy work of preaching, unfolding divine truth, analyzing and developing texts that are the very mind of God, "speaking as God's mouth the infinite things of the Spirit," can it be anything else than divine human work? Take away the co-operating agency of the Holy Spirit in the analysis of the text, the preparation of the plan, and the composition and delivery of the sermon, and what is it, what can it be, but simply natural discourse—a human but not a divine human product. The mere use of the letter of God's word does not lift the discourse out of the natural into the spiritual realm. It is when he, the Holy Ghost, preaches, that we have true preaching. And his agency starts with the selection of a theme, the choice of a text, and continues through the meditation on it, the elucidation of it, the construction of the discourse and its delivery. It is not simply there at the contact of the sermon with the hearer's heart and conscience in the public assembly that his aid is to be invoked, or expected. Throughout the whole process he is a co-worker. "We work according to his working who worketh in us mightily." Ignore this and we are left to naturalism in the most important department of ministerial toil. Concede it, believe it, get thoroughly possessed of the conviction that in the entire ordering as well as in the issues of homiletic preparation for the pulpit, the Spirit of God has a co-operating agency; and what intensity of devotion will be given to it? A zeal in temper with the Holy Spirit's zeal which must be as Christ's was, will be the homilete's as he studies and analyzes and plans in the prosecution of his preparatory as well as his pulpit work.

Its supreme aim, its subject matter, its ruling spirit, its un-
earthly sanctions, its co-operating agent; these are some of the
great and mighty ideas which stand indissolubly connected with
the work of preaching, and which uplift and glorify the homi-
letic art, and are fitted to arouse a lofty enthusiasm in its prose-
cution. What are mortal daubings on canvas when painting
can be done with eternity for a back ground? What are Thor-
waldsen's or Angelo's chiselings in marble when sculptured souls
may be the immortal product of our toil? What is it to make
poems and orations to kindle only natural emotions when ser-

mons may be made that shall put a new song on the lips of immortal men to be sung forever?

Surely it is a shame to students of God's mysteries if they grow not in love with their homiletic toil. Men pursue their secular arts; they go to the preparation of marble and canvas and poem with hearts beating, all aglow with enthusiasm, fired with a passion for their work. Ought not this divinest of arts, which it is the special province of the Chair of Sacred Rhetoric to teach, to waken a grander enthusiasm and to possess with a more consuming zeal?

Do we magnify the office? Be it freely acknowledged. God grant that it may be magnified in the thought of every preacher of His Word. We have the profound conviction that what the pulpit of our day most needs is just this: Not better theologians, not greater learning, not vaster stores of information, but the art of using what it already possesses. If the element of enthusiasm could be put into the preparation and delivery of sermons all over our land, in thousands of instances the effect would be like a resurrection of the dead. The *art of preaching* has been sadly and widely ignored and forgotten in a too exclusive and absorbed attention to the subject matter. The structural work of sermonizing, the rhetorical form, the adaptation in method and dress of thought to the best effects, have far too little heed, while sermons are too often delivered with a tameness and slovenliness and utter indifference to oratorical excellence, scarcely befitting the common talk of the street.

The pulpit wants (is it extravagant to say it), above all else, enthusiastic homiletes—men not only consecrated to the general work of the ministry, but fired with a passion for the art of preaching, filled with a holy zeal for effective sermonizing—men who shall be more earnestly and sacredly ambitious to have the best methods of preaching, and to know how to use them so as to exert power over men, and win prizes in the arena where souls may be won, than the old Grecians were to excel as athletes and win prizes in the ancient games. May God help our seminaries to make such men.