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ARTICLE I.

BENEVOLENCE AND SELFISHNESS.

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It is asserted by many, by some even who appear to be exemplary Christians and able divines, that *self-love* is the moving principle of all voluntary action; that it is common to saints and sinners; that it is an essential element in benevolence itself. By others, it is considered as identical with selfishness; as directly opposed to benevolence; as the radical principle of all iniquity. Is it not high time, that Christian brethren should come to some understanding, with respect to the essential characteristic of the religion which they profess? If the existing disagreement, on this all important point, is in *appearance* only; if it is nothing more than a difference in the interpretation of certain words and phrases, while there is a real harmony of belief, with respect to the nature of the distinction between virtue and vice, benevolence and selfishness; strenuous efforts ought to be made to dispel the mists which the ambiguities of language have thrown around the subject; that those who are brethren in profession should no longer be alienated from each other, on account of supposed differences of opinion, which are, in reality, only verbal; and on the other hand, that those who have adopted erroneous and heretical tenets, should not have the

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vice. He was the slave to his lusts, and God ensnared him in his own rash vow; he no doubt also held him responsible for the consequence. Neither was God's command to Abraham to offer up Isaac a parallel case. He tried Abraham's faith, but saved him from any result which would leave the suspicion of cruelty on his character. The case before us, on adopting the received translation, is a perfect anomaly in the providence of God.

From all these considerations, we regard the marginal as the true reading; and suppose that Jephthah, instead of offering his daughter in sacrifice as a burnt-offering, devoted her in some special way to the service of the Lord and to a life of celibacy. He "did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man."

ARTICLE VII.

CHRIST THE PREACHER'S MODEL.

By Rev. Asa D. Smith, Pastor of the Brainerd Presbyterian Church, New-York.

It is not the design of the present article to dwell on our Lord's more private excellences. We touch not, except in the way of brief and incidental reference, on the blamelessness of his general life, his meekness and lowliness of mind, his ever active benevolence, his zeal for God's glory, his devotional habits, his self-sacrificing spirit. We consider him not even, so to speak, as a theologian—but simply as a Preacher. It is doubtless proper thus to regard him. There are certain limitations, however, with which his example should be copied, and, to preclude all misapprehension, it may be well just to glance at these in the outset.

The circumstances of his ministry were in some respects peculiar. This remark might be illustrated by many a reference to the character of the age in which he lived, and to the genius and habits of the people among whom he labored. And it has an important relation to his preaching considered as a model. Forms, both of speech and action, change somewhat with circumstances. They are seldom, therefore, to be exactly copied,

however worthy of adoption the unchanging principles they embody. Our Lord's example, indeed, in all its departments, is to be followed rather as to its principles, its elements of excellence, than as to its outward shapes; accommodated as those shapes were to surrounding circumstances, and different, in many points, as those circumstances were from ours. Again, our Lord's character was unlike that of his servants in respect to his perfect holiness. It was altogether natural and proper that this should in some degree modify his preaching. He could say, fearlessly, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" It was quite becoming in him, therefore, to reprove with a severity, and to denounce with a sternness, which would hardly befit those who are themselves transgressors,—who adopt, every one of them, the confession of Paul, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." And further, divinity was in Christ united with humanity. He could properly speak, as God does in the Scriptures generally, with an air of authority which a worm of the dust may not assume. And so he did speak, at certain times especially, Deity shining out through the veil of flesh. We may add, that during our Lord's ministry, anterior at least to his death, the work of redemption was incomplete. Of consequence, the great system of gospel truth could be but partially exhibited. Many things pertaining to it, even his disciples could not bear till he had risen from the dead. Our Lord was straitened, even as to his teaching, till his baptism of blood was accomplished. It was reserved for the Apostles and their successors in the ministry, to preach Christ crucified with a distinctness and fullness which that doctrine could not well assume, while, as yet, the cross had not been erected.

But these limitations affect not our general position. As to all the great points of excellence in pulpit discourse, our Lord's preaching may still be regarded as a perfect model. To some of its main characteristics, as thus apprehended, we propose to advert, attempting, of course, in a single article, but an outline.

We notice first its *spirituality*. Of this there are various aspects. It is one of the most obvious, that he kept aloof from all secular topics. He declared, emphatically, that his kingdom was "not of this world;" and with this announcement all his preaching corresponded. He delivered no political discourses. Political evils there certainly were around him—evils unfriendly

to the progress of the gospel, and which the spirit of the gospel was suited to eradicate. But he meddled not with them directly. It was impossible to draw him into a discussion of them. Cæsar might be a tyrant—he doubtless was. His government was little better than a system of slavery. He made sad havoc of human rights. Yet all our Lord could be induced to say of him, even when artfully and earnestly interrogated, was but to suggest certain great and efficacious principles, which he left it for his hearers to apply: "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." When requested, on a certain occasion, to assume, as it were, judicial functions, to settle a question of heirship, his ready response was, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" And he proceeded to expose the inward evil, which formed, doubtless, the chief difficulty in the case: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." As if he had said, "It is the main object of my ministry to promote inward purity. This attained, all secular evils will either pass away or become tolerable." In accordance with such views he seems to have always acted. Slavery existed in the world, and that of the most revolting kind, during his whole ministry. It existed in the very empire to which Judea was attached, yet he never made it the object of a specific attack. He knew full well that the best way to extirpate it, was to establish his kingdom in human hearts. The apparatus of war was around him, and "wars and rumors of wars" were predicted by him. Yet he never preached "a peace sermon," as that term would be understood by some. If the peace of God should but pervade the spirits of men, he was well assured they would have peace with each other. What a lesson have we here for the gospel minister! He may not close his eyes to the secular grievances of the times, to the disorders of the social system, to political abuses, and international evils. But he should ever remember, that his chief reformatory agency, as to all these matters, is the simple preaching of the gospel, the winning of soul after soul to Christ. And this, he may be assured, is the mightiest of all agencies.

The spirituality of our Lord's preaching was apparent, also, in his manner of exhibiting divine things. It was seen in his treatment of religious forms and ceremonies. These he did not, indeed, wholly repudiate, but he made them, comparatively, of little account. To the Jews, burdened not only with the Mosaic ritual, but with superadded traditions of the elders, he said,

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." In reproof of their formality, he quoted the declaration of God by the prophet, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." "God," he taught them, "is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." He cast no contempt on rites divinely appointed, but he laid no undue stress upon them. He gave not the slightest countenance to those who contend for certain ceremonies, as if the salvation of the world were at stake, and who exclude from their fellowship all who differ from them. The circumstantialia, the drapery, the mere appendages and symbols of religion, he ever represented as of very inferior consequence. In all his preaching, the weightier matters of the law, and the great essentials of the gospel, were the all-absorbing topics. In all his inculcations of religious duty, we may add, he had respect chiefly to *the inward life*. At an early period in his ministry, he refuted the superficial interpretations of the law current among the Jews. He taught them that God's commandment was exceeding broad, and that it had respect primarily and mainly to the inner man. He was always chiefly intent on the rectification of the spirit. "Out of the abundance of the heart," his doctrine was, "the mouth speaketh;" "out of the heart" proceedeth all manner of wickedness. He aimed at the reformation of the whole man, by setting right the foundations and elements of character, the sources and springs of action.

In all this how wise and salutary was his example! How vain are all attempts at reform, which are chiefly directed to the outward life! If ever so successful, they would still come far short of God's standard—they would fail to fit the soul for heaven. But in the nature of things, they must be comparatively powerless. The farther you depart from the spiritualities of religion, the less you have to do with conscience. She seconds your efforts but feebly, when they have little respect to her chief sphere of jurisdiction, the world within. And if, by other means, you succeed in producing some external change, it will probably prove but temporary. You have been cleansing the stream, while the fountain is still foul and turbid. The lava has been pent up for a little season, and flowers have been scattered around, but it will soon burst forth, the more terrible and destructive for the very restraint it has suffered. Who has not observed, how utterly inefficacious that preaching has soon become, whose expositions and injunctions reproofs and horta-

tives, have had to do chiefly with the outward conduct? A congregation under such training will soon remind the most superficial observer of "the heath in the desert." The noise, and stir, and bustle, to which clerical empiricism at first gave rise, will soon subside into the stillness and quietude of death. A sort of galvanic treatment may produce startling spasms for a time, but even these will soon cease. To drop the figure, it will come to pass, ere long, that though the preacher stand up in the holy place, and utter the most earnest entreaties, and the most awful rebukes and denunciations, he will yet seem to himself and to others, "as one that beateth the air." How different the result of eminently spiritual preaching, such as our Lord's! It bids streams gush forth in the desert. It forms not merely the cold and lifeless statue, but animates it with fire from heaven. If the heart be right, all will be right. If the life of God be but begun in the soul of man, you shall see in all the visible character the outgoings of that life. Let the gospel minister, then, imitate most carefully the spirituality of his Lord's teaching.

We may further illustrate the point in hand, by reference to the motives with which Christ was wont to enforce his teaching. His preaching in this respect was at a great remove from that mawkish *sentimentalism*, which may suit well enough the pages of an album, or an annual, but has little effect on man's higher susceptibilities, and is miserably out of place in the pulpit. Nor were his persuasives drawn, as is sometimes the case, from the twilight region of natural theology—from the cold and cheerless sphere of the heathen moralist. He had no resemblance, he afforded not the slightest countenance, to the preacher of whom it has been well said,

"How oft when Paul has served him for a text,
Haw Plato, Tully, Epictetus preached!"

The morality he inculcated was enforced by highly spiritual motives. It was in this respect eminently evangelical. It was closely linked with the cross. Its sanctions and incitements were mainly gathered from the great scheme of redemption.

Another prominent excellence of our Lord's preaching, was its *simplicity*. This was a very natural result of its spirituality. He is most likely to be simple, who concerns himself chiefly with the great fundamentals of duty, with the inward elements of character. Hence the whole Bible is thus distinguished, and no part of it more so than the discourses of Christ.

This characteristic of his preaching may be considered in two points of light, in respect both to language and thought. His language was exceedingly simple. Not that it was low, or even inelegant. In more beautiful costume thought was never arrayed. The quotations so often made from his discourses, even when connected with the highest strains of human eloquence, are, to say the least of them, and to speak of their style alone, "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." They are beautiful in all their simplicity—yea, they are beautifully simple. This characteristic of language has, of itself, a charm. It not only brings truth down to the level of common minds, but makes that truth more attractive. And while it involves nothing of vulgarity or coarseness, we may truly say, that it is compatible with the very highest adornment.

But simplicity of *thought* is still more important, as to all the best ends of discourse, than simplicity of speech. Yet the one, obviously, may exist without the other. Nay, if we mistake not, the one has sometimes been the subject of much attention and solicitude, while the other has been little regarded. In our Lord's preaching, however, both these characteristics were combined. His trains of thought were marked by great simplicity. His illustrations were all borrowed from the objects of nature and the common affairs of life. Nor were they, on this account, the less clear and impressive; the reverse rather was true. It is a wise remark of Bacon, "They be not the highest instances that give the securest information, as may be well expressed in the tale so common of the philosopher, that while he gazed upwards to the stars he fell into the water; for if he had looked down, he might have seen the stars in the water, but looking aloft, he could not see the water in the stars. So it cometh often to pass, that mean and small things discover great, better than great discover the small." In simile and allegory, we may add, the preaching of Christ abounded. It may almost be said of his whole ministry, "without a parable spake he not." Truth was thus made palpable to the plainest understanding. Never did he exhibit it in an abstract way. His preaching was replete, if we may so say, with simple concretions. He dealt chiefly with masses of thought, with organic forms, rather than dissected members. He might be likened rather to the painter or the sculptor, than to the chemist or anatomist. He avoided utterly that excess of analysis which renders the preaching of some so

dry and unprofitable. Illustrations of these remarks we might draw from all his discourses. It will suffice to select but one.

On a certain occasion a lawyer "stood up and tempted him." He begged to know how he could secure eternal life. Jesus, in reply, referred him to the divine law, and questioned him as to his knowledge of it. He answered discreetly, giving a summary of the decalogue, and our Lord made application of it to his conscience. Willing, however, to justify himself, and troubled especially, it would seem, by the second great commandment, he began to question Jesus in respect to the duty it enjoins. "Who is my neighbor?" What is the nature and extent of the benevolence required? A great question this—a grand point in theology, proposed, too, by a learned and subtle man, and addressed to one "in whom are held all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." How, think you, did he reply? Let conjecture, for a moment, take the place of memory, and the thought-worn theologian answer after his kind. "He defined true benevolence, doubtless," methinks I hear one say, "as the love of being in general." "Whatever else, he said," another replies, "he made this point clear, unquestionably, that of all specific, voluntary action, happiness is the ultimate end." "Whatever view he took," says another, "he doubtless entered deeply into the nature of moral distinctions, and the ground of moral obligation; into the relations of man to his fellow-man, and the origin and scope of the social affections. His definitions, it may be presumed, were the most exact, his analysis profound and perfect, and his exposition of the whole subject—of its metaphysical aspects especially—clear, logical, and systematic." Turn we now to the record, and not a single definition do we find, not a solitary analytical process, not one abstract statement, not the merest shadow of metaphysics. His response was but a simple allegory: "A certain man came down from Jerusalem unto Jericho, and fell among thieves." We need not repeat the rest, it is fresh in the reader's recollection. Instead of defining, or analyzing, or abstracting benevolence, he painted it, he bade it live and move, in human form, as it were, before his cavilling auditor.

The great importance of simplicity in preaching, is apparent from various considerations. It is impossible without it to interest deeply the common people. By abstract and excessively analytic discourse, they are little moved, and less profited. They may admire, vaguely, the preacher's profoundness, but they

understand him not, and weariness soon ensues. They care much less, indeed, for the recondite qualities of things, than for their obvious and practical nature. If truth interests them at all, it is in the living and palpable forms which the Bible gives it. If the water of life allures them, it is not as *decomposed*, but as it flows from the throne of God and the Lamb. And the common people, be it remembered, are the great mass of the people, the great majority of our hearers, and withal the most hopeful subjects of ministerial labor. It was so in the days of Christ. His ministry was chiefly attended by the plain people, and of that class were most of his followers. He had good reason, then, for adapting his preaching to such. And so have his ministers now. He of whom it cannot be said that the common people hear him gladly, may look for little success as a preacher of the gospel. He may be distinguished as a poet, or a critic, as a historian, an antiquarian, or a metaphysician, as deeply versed in theology even—but not as winning souls to Christ.

The wisdom of our Lord's example, in respect to the point in hand, may be still further evinced. Simplicity of discourse is quite as effective with the truly intellectual, as with the common people. It is no indication of feebleness or poverty of mind, but the very reverse. It is easy enough to make a plain subject dark, by pedantic and profitless distinctions and definitions; but it is one of the highest achievements of intellect to make a dark subject so plain, that all shall wonder it ever seemed otherwise. Never is learning so magnified, as when she passes over her processes, and gives you her simple results. So the truly learned judge. Hence they respect most highly the preacher who, other things being equal, is most eminent for simplicity of discourse. And the preaching of such a man, is to them, as well as the common people, the most impressive. The truth is, the commonest sympathies of our race, the most ordinary springs of action, are ever the mightiest. Ascertain what chord is of deepest tone in the hearts of the multitude, and you have learned what chord will vibrate most powerfully in the bosoms of the intellectual few.

Another leading characteristic of our Saviour's preaching was its *directness*. It is possible that pulpit discourse should fail in this point, even when in some good degree spiritual and simple. We mean by directness, such a manner of exhibiting truth, as makes the audience feel that they themselves are concerned in it.

It is quite possible so to present human depravity, that even the attentive hearer shall hardly be reminded that *he* is depraved ; so to insist on penitence, that he shall hardly once think of it as a duty which *he* should perform. You may so speak of "the sinner," or of "sinners," that you shall scarcely be suspected of the slightest reference to the persons present. And though your teaching be orthodox, and your announcements of coming wrath distinct and emphatic, every heart before you may be as quiet as if your discourse had related to the dwellers in some other planet. It was eminently otherwise with Christ. He always made his hearers feel, not only that his speech was to them, but that they were interested in the truths he uttered. He not only declared to Nicodemus the general doctrine of the new birth, but he said also, "Ye must be born again." "Art *thou* a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" To one who was curious to learn whether few or many would be saved, he said, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate;" thus reminding him that it should be his main object to secure his own salvation. In addressing the Scribes and Pharisees, his application of truth was often most pungent and terrible. "Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." "Wo unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." As on a certain occasion he was uttering reproofs like these, one of the lawyers said to him, "Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also." But so far from retracting or qualifying what he had uttered, our Lord promptly replied, "Wo unto you, also, ye lawyers!" It is said, in a certain place, that "when the chief priests and Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them." He so shaped his discourse on a particular occasion, that "they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last." And the testimony of the woman of Samaria was, "Come, see a man which told me all the things that ever I did."

In all this he exhibited great fearlessness. For he knew full well it would give offence to many, and provoke, at times, the most violent opposition. And such, doubtless, to some extent, will be the result of a similar strain of preaching at

the present day. It will be unhesitatingly adopted, however, by the wise and faithful minister. He can hope, otherwise, for but little success. A general statement of truth—a statement of it as relating to the world at large—the deceitful and self-flattering heart will be likely to disregard. It is only as “thou art the man,” rings in the perishing sinner’s ear, that preaching does its perfect work. We are not, indeed, at liberty, as we have before remarked, to adopt the air of majesty, or the tone of awful severity, which sometimes marked our Lord’s discourses. But our speech may, like his, abound in the *second*, rather than the *third person*. We may rest not till each hearer feels that *he* is intended. And as subservient to such a result, we should beware, as our Lord did, of needlessly qualifying truth. How broadly and boldly did he state it—in what paradoxes sometimes! “I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?” “I came not to send peace, but a sword.” How unlike was his manner in this respect to a certain cautious and circumlocutory way of preaching. It is quite possible to utter the great verities of the gospel, with such qualifications, exceptions, limitations, provisos, and reserves, that though they may still retain in some sense their identity, they not only lose much of their appropriate force and beauty, but what is specially to be deplored, their application to individual cases is much less likely to be felt.

The excellence of our Lord’s preaching is further manifest as we advert to its *symmetry*. By this we intend, generally, that every thing pertaining to his discourses was in due proportion. There was, in his ministry, no improper magnifying of any one doctrine or duty, no exclusive dwelling on any one topic. Nor was any one class of hearers regarded to the overlooking of others. He rightly divided the word, giving to every one a portion in due season. It would be a pleasant and edifying work, to review our Lord’s discourses with reference either to the variety of topics presented, and the symmetrical development of each, or to the varieties of character and condition to which his instructions had appropriate reference. We shall confine ourselves, however, to another and somewhat less obvious view.

Our Lord’s preaching may be regarded as of perfect symmetry, in respect to its wise adaptation to the whole nature of man, its due regard to all the departments of his complex being. Considered as the subject of pulpit ministrations, he may be describ-

ed as made up of *intellect, conscience, and heart*. And preaching may be characterized from its bearing on these several parts of his compound nature. It is not affirmed, of course, that it is possible to address human beings on religious subjects without appealing, more or less, to all these conjoined capacities. But it is quite possible—as facts have abundantly shown—to give some one of them disproportionate attention. There are those who preach chiefly to the intellect, to the comparative neglect of the conscience and the heart. There are others who discourse mainly to the conscience, to the neglect of the heart and the intellect. And there are others still who address the heart chiefly, to the neglect of both the other departments of our being. Such faults, however, receive no countenance from the Saviour's ministry.

Preaching may be addressed, we have said, too exclusively to the intellect. Dry and unprofitable will such discourse be, whether of the topical or textual sort. Even when it keeps closest to the divine word—with its green pastures and still waters—it fails of furnishing appropriate spiritual nutriment. It is not under the attenuated, plodding metaphysician alone, that

“The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed.”

In like unhappy plight may be the flocks of some who value themselves greatly on their exegetical skill. Preachers we have certainly heard, who reminded us forcibly of a quaint remark of Ralph Cudworth. “There is,” says he, “a *caro* and a *spiritus*, a flesh and a spirit, a body and a soul, in all the writings of the Scriptures. It is but the flesh and body of divine truths that is printed upon paper, which many moths of books and libraries do only feed upon; many walking skeletons of knowledge, that bury and entomb truths in the living sepulchres of their souls, do only converse with; such as never did any thing else but pick at the mere bark and rind of truths, and crack the shells of them.” But let us not be understood to decry the exercise of intellect in the pulpit, or the fullest appeal to the mental capacities. The human understanding is tasked to the utmost by the religion of Christ. And the gospel is eminently conducive to vigor and enlargement of mind. The wise preacher will beware, however, of that sort of discourse which

“Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart.”

He will beware of addressing the intellect to the neglect of

the conscience—that regent *de jure* of all the soul's faculties. So his Lord's example teaches him. While the discourses of Christ were highly intellectual, they dealt most faithfully with the moral sense; they kept the heart in continual and vigorous action. It is only thus, indeed—as it would be easy to show at large—that gospel ministrations are of highest advantage to the mental powers. It is only thus, of course, that the soul's salvation can be secured. Let a minister so preach, that truth becomes with his hearers the object of mere intellection, and his discourse, however applauded, will be to them but “a savor of death unto death.”

It was said, also, that the conscience may be too exclusively addressed. However important, in some respects, its functions, it has no power of itself to purify the heart. It may be roused to intensest action, while depravity still rages and rules. It convinces of sin, but it melts not the soul into penitence; it produces of itself, neither faith, nor hope, nor charity, nor the peace of God. To this latter result, other appliances are essential. You must appeal to the heart. The fragrance of the divine goodness must be diffused around it—it must be bedewed with the tears, and bathed in the blood of Christ. The symphonies of heaven must steal sweetly over it. Thus, too, is the piety of God's people most advanced. How powerless, even as to them, is discourse mainly objurgatory! How often do they remain cold-hearted under it, and barren, and unprofitable; how often does it seem even to sear the conscience itself! Against the error now referred to, the preacher would be effectually secured by a close observance of his Lord's example. Christ did, indeed, as has been remarked, address the conscience most pungently; but knowing what is in man, he appealed not to that alone. While he reproves, he allures; while he holds up with one hand the condemning law, he points with the other to the cross on which he hung, and to the mansions he has prepared for his followers.

The wisdom of his example is further manifest, as we recur to the suggestion, that even the heart may be disproportionately addressed. Deal with it to the comparative neglect of the intellect, and fanaticism is the natural result; a religion of mere feeling is engendered, of blind and bewildering impulses, of endless and perilous vagaries. Address it powerfully to the overlooking of conscience, and a miserably *selfish* piety will be likely to ensue. In place of self-denial, there will be real,

though perhaps covert, self-gratification ; and a specious but sinister *utility* will wear the honors which belong only to *rectitude*. How admirable were Christ's appeals, in that they were so happily balanced—to the heart, indeed, as we have said, but to the heart in fitting proportion ;—to the intellect and conscience in due measure also. To all the departments of our complex nature, but to all in perfect symmetry.

There is another, and that a crowning excellence of Christ's preaching, which we may not fail to notice. We refer to its *affectionateness*. Our readers are familiar with the ancient and oft-quoted maxim,

— “ Si vis me flere dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi.”

“ If you wish me to weep, you must first manifest emotion yourself.” Most felicitously has Goethe expressed this same sentiment :

“ Persuasion, friend, comes not by toil or art ;
Hard study never made the matter clearer :
'Tis the live fountain in the speaker's heart,
Sends forth the streams that melt the ravished hearer.
Then work away for life ; heap book on book,
Line upon line, and precept on example :
The stupid multitude may gape and look,
And fools may think your stock of wisdom ample :
But all remain unmoved : to touch the heart—
To make men feel, requires a different art.
For touching hearts the only secret known,
My worthy friend, is this :—to have one of your own !”*

To secure the highest ends of sacred eloquence, however, regard must be had to the kind, as well as the degree of emotion. It is very possible for the preacher to be highly excited, in view not so much of the truth he unfolds, in itself considered, or in its momentous applications, as of the intellectual processes to which he subjects it ; the nice discrimination, the profound analysis, the lucid arrangement, the strict and conclusive ratiocination. He may be like the hireling painter, who feels little interest in the countenance before him, but is delighted with his own imitation of it, with the rapidity and perfectness with which he transfers it to the canvass. Emotion of this sort will have little effect on the mass of hearers. The preacher's sympathies must pass beyond his subject, considered simply as such, to the

* Translated by A. E. Everett.

souls he seeks to save. He must show himself interested in their fearful state—not merely as a theme of discourse, but as an object of affecting contemplation—if he would hope to preach successfully. In other words, he must manifest in his preaching deep and unaffected love for souls. With what a charm does love invest even the simplest forms of speech! It makes the severest reproof comparatively grateful. Let a frown becloud your brow, and angry words fall from your lips, and however pointed and just your censure, however cogent your arguments for reform, they will be all in vain. You will meet with a cold, and perhaps disdainful repulse. But go to an erring fellow-man, under the strong impulses of benevolence, let your tones be tremulous with compassion, and the dew of kindness glisten in your eye; let your words be fraught with tenderness, and your whole demeanor bespeak deep and disinterested regard; and if the case be not utterly hopeless, your pleading will be prevalent. Oh, there is nothing like the eloquence of love! The doomed man in his dungeon, all blood-stained and hard-hearted, is melted by it, and becomes, the while, like a little child. You may sit by his side, and open before him the dark catalogue of his crimes; you may expatiate upon them, you may appeal most powerfully to his slumbering conscience; all this you may do, though many a cold-hearted intruder has been driven with curses from his cell, if your tears do but fall while you speak. You can say to men, indeed, just what you please—you can do with them, we had almost added, just what you will—if they do but see evidence that you love them.

Now in the blessed and potent quality of kindness, the speech of Christ was unrivalled. He is in this respect, as well as others, a perfect model for the preacher. God is said to be love itself: and Christ was love incarnate. The savor of that same compassion which led him to the cross, was diffused through all his discourses. Well might the people wonder “at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.” Even with his most fearful rebukes, what expressions of tenderness were often linked! It was on the same occasion when he said to the Jews, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell,” that he exclaimed also, “Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!” How does the example of Christ forbid in

his ministers all harshness and bitterness of speech! How does it frown on a denunciatory spirit! With what sweet enforcement does it call for kindness and gentleness, for "bowels of compassion," and pleadings fraught with love.

Such are some of the leading characteristics of our Lord's preaching. Such is the perfect and delightful pattern which the Bible holds forth to every minister of the gospel. How important to every preacher, we remark in conclusion, is intimate acquaintance with Christ! How desirable that he should so study the record of our Lord's ministry, as to catch the very spirit and manner of his preaching, just as by familiarity with some loved and venerated friend, we acquire often his very tones, and gestures, and forms of speech. Of other models of eloquence, he need not, he should not be ignorant. He may listen to the orators of ancient time. He may linger a while even in the heathen forum, and may give his ear to the more eloquent of the Christian fathers. He may seek improvement in the study of the more modern pulpit. No little advantage will he gain from familiarity with such eminent preachers as Baxter, and Howe, and Leighton, and Edwards, and Whitefield. But they are all imperfect models. He should turn from them all, at last, to him who spake as never man spake. With him he should commune, till as he opens his lips in the sacred desk, the very manner of his preaching shall remind his hearers of Christ, and they shall take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus. The word of such a man is seldom in vain. It contains within itself the most potent elements of moral suasion: and according, as it does, with the mind of Christ, he delights to crown it with his blessing.
