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several Parochial Registers. Colonel Chester's "Register of Westminster Abbey" is a model for such work. That such an undertaking should have been perfected by a citizen of the United States is in itself a reflection upon ourselves. It might open our eyes to the fact that our Church Records are something more than national, that they are the heirlooms of the English-speaking race in every continent. We owe something to others as well as to ourselves in this matter.

To Churchmen, however, and to the clergy in particular, this subject commends itself in an especial manner, because these records are ecclesiastical records; they are interwoven with the religious life. "The weddings, the christenings, and the burials" of the English people are something more than the civil record of their "births, deaths, and marriages." There is, besides, a human interest, which to philosophers may seem a folly, but which is, nevertheless, a very ancient and a very common weakness, the desire to know and to visit the family birthplace. The Church of England need not be ashamed of gratifying such curiosity. England is the cradle of many nations, and Englishmen have many kinsmen who are not ashamed of their English ancestry. In such sentiment is grounded the tie of family relationship which binds together the Anglo-Norman races of the world. In our Church books, unprinted, unindexed, and scattered over ten thousand places, the proofs of our kinsmanship lie hid.

STANLEY LEIGHTON.

ART. III.—ST. AUGUSTINE ON PREACHING.

THE experience of a great orator is probably of little value to the man endowed with few gifts of eloquence. The speaker on whose utterance the senate, the bar, the popular assembly, or the congregation has waited, hardly knowing the lapse of time, has few secrets which can be conveyed to other men. There are incommunicable gifts of voice, of intonation, of manner, of sympathy, which no analysis can define, and no insight entirely discover. Yet something can be done by which culture can make the man of inferior gifts more clear, more incisive, more sympathetic, and so both more interesting and more useful.

In the fourth book of his "Christian Learning," St. Augustine proposed to himself some helpful instruction of this sort. He connects the subject with the former books already discussed

in these pages,[1] by the obvious remark that preaching makes known to others the meaning of Holy Scripture which methodical study has ascertained. It will hardly be expected that anything new remains to be gathered from a teacher who has been before the world for nearly a millennium and a half. The interest, whatever it may amount to, will mainly lie in comparing the ideas of that far-off time with those of our own age.

The previous training of the Christian preacher has been of late a matter of much solicitude. Great orators, both in Church and State, have been produced from the busier haunts of men as well as from the Universities. Nevertheless, all sections of the Church, and the laity perhaps especially, have prayed to be delivered from an unlearned clergy. St. Augustine takes up this subject, and while warning us that the preliminary secular teaching is to be acquired elsewhere, and not to be looked for in this book, he adds:—

> By the art of rhetoric, both truth and falsehood may be enforced. Who then would dare to say that truth should stand unarmed against falsehood? Shall the teacher of that which is false know how to attract his hearer, while the defender of the truth fails through ignorance? Shall the one set forth his fallacies with brevity, clearness, and plausibility, while the other is tedious to hear, difficult to understand, nay hard to believe? Shall argument assail the truth and advocate error, and shall it fail us in defending the truth and refuting falsity? Shall that power which awes, which melts, which excites and arouses the hearer, be found on the side of error, while a frigid sluggishness drones forth sleepy truisms for the verity of the faith? Who is such a fool as to confess such an opinion? Why, then, do not good men engage in such studies as may fit them to fight for the truth, since bad men use them for their own evil ends? All that belongs to the art of persuasion has been handled by masters in that science from times of old, and may be acquired at the proper age.—c. ii., p. 3.

What is that proper age, according to Augustine? The time of youth, he replies, for it must be acquired speedily or not at all. For the chiefs of Roman eloquence declared that he who cannot learn it quickly will never learn it.

But Augustine pronounces a very clear opinion, that example is far before precept in making an effective speaker. Where there is genius and fervency, to hear or to read true eloquence is the best mode of instruction. A great speaker may, indeed, fashion his speech according to rule, but the process is instinctive, not conscious or intentional. "He fulfils the rhetorical precept because he is eloquent. He does not employ it in order to be eloquent."

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[1] THE CHURCHMAN, November and December, 1882.

As a matter of fact and experience, Augustine tells us he had known very many persons who, without knowledge of rhetorical rules, were more eloquent than others who had learned them. But that he had not known one who could be so accounted without hearing or reading the debates and speeches of eloquent men.

In listening to this ancient Doctor on this subject, we must remember that he combined both these functions in his own person. In his unconverted days he was a teacher of the art of rhetoric. As Bishop he was one of the most persuasive of preachers. If the conclusion just drawn from his experience be true, we may learn something of the cause of our confessed deficiency in this respect. Surely, if eloquence thus breeds eloquence, dulness and insipidity must in like manner propagate their own brood. What is there to suggest even the idea of pulpit eloquence to persons trained up from boyhood as most of our clergy are? The power of the Spirit of God waking up all the sensibilities of the renewed heart can break through what seemed inveterate stupor. But, taking Augustine's dictum of experience, would it be found largely reflected in modern times? It would probably require many qualifications, like most other broad statements; but would it not be admitted that the preaching of Charles Simeon on the one side of the Church, and of Canon Liddon on the other, had been fruitful not only in certain schools of doctrine, but in the production of many effective and powerful advocates of their teaching?

But we must return to our author. Having thus dismissed the question of preliminary training for the Christian preacher, he proceeds to consider his duty.

In his definition of that duty the subject of controversy at once presents itself. The Christian teacher is defined as "one who, being the defender of the true faith and the vanquisher of error, teaches what is good, and unteaches what is bad" ("Defensor rectæ fidei ac debellator erroris, et bona docere, et mala dedocere").

It is difficult to understand the position of our own age in respect to religious controversy. Sometimes it seems as if the one portion only of Augustine's definition of the preacher's office were accepted. It is said to be his duty, "*bona docere.*" If you ask further, "What about '*mala dedocere*'?" the answer is very dubious. Some "bad things," bad morals, for example, want of charitable judgment and so forth, no doubt ought to be "untaught." But if we proceed to ask, "Is he not, then, to be '*defensor rectæ fidei*'?" the answer again becomes vague. "What is the '*recta fides*'? Surely you do not require him to maintain all the dogmas of the Thirty-Nine Articles? Nay,

the Athanasian Creed is rather narrow and severe. That also should be somewhat slurred, and scarcely 'defended,' at least with any vigour." Then, "*debellator erroris*"? There our modern critic of the preacher parts company altogether. "No war in the pulpit, no contention, no strife of opposing systems! Is not Christianity a religion of peace? And are we any of us sufficiently sure of anything to justify controversy? Good men will soon see that they must do good in their own way, and be equally glad to see others doing good in their way also." This seemed the practical meaning of a recent article in the *Times* on the late Archbishop of Canterbury; at least, if it had any practical meaning. Then, again, a large part of the public seems to understand, by "controversy," argumentative teaching against Roman doctrines wherever they may be found. Dr. Pusey's school may pour forth its volumes large and small, and may inculcate its dogmas from the pulpit, contravening, one by one, each doctrine of the Church of England in favour of mediæval teaching. But the Protestant speaker or writer who ventures to defend his faith is at once branded as a controversial party-writer. Why more so than others who have taken the opposite side? Why should Canon Gregory, at the last Church Congress, charge Canon Hoare with introducing "party spirit," when all that he did was to reply with vigour, energy, and unfailing good-temper to the opposite "party" manifesto of Mr. Wood? There is, at any rate, *something* that is "error." If the Christian preacher is not to be a nerveless, silken declaimer, he must be as Augustine describes him, "*debellator erroris*," whether that error lie in the field of morals or of doctrine. No man was ever yet the teacher of his age who had not a vigorous theory to defend, and clear principles of philosophy or theology upon which his teaching was based. Controversy there must be, as certainly as there are truth and error. The modes of controversy are another thing.

There are, then, according to Augustine, two duties before the Christian preacher, construction and destruction—"*docere*" and "*dedocere*," "*defendere*" and "*debellare*." He must, therefore, consider well the condition of his hearers. Three chief anxieties will accordingly press upon him. Opposition must be conciliated; inattention aroused; ignorance instructed. Hence to rouse the feelings and bring the hearer into sympathetic receptiveness, may require every resource of eloquence; while for the purpose of instruction, illustrative anecdote and close reasoning will be needed in their turn.

But what shall be said for the minister of Christ who is but too deeply conscious that he lacks that gift of genius? The venerable teacher tells him (c. v. 7), that however precious

that gift, yet to speak with wisdom is that which alone is truly profitable to man. This brings us back once more to the firm footing laid down in the previous books. For what is wisdom? We have this reply:—

A man speaks wisely, just so much more or less, as he has advanced in his knowledge of Holy Scripture. Not simply in frequent reading and committing its words to memory, but in the understanding and diligent search into its varied meanings. For there are those who read negligently. They read with verbal memory. They do not cultivate the understanding. Better than these is the mind less retentive of the words, provided the very heart of Scripture is discerned by the eye of the soul. Best of all is the accurate memory coupled with a true Scriptural understanding.

We have heard all this before, the reader may say. Doubtless! The very point of these papers is to show that what we hold to be true is just what the great teachers of the fifth century believed also. This is the Reformation doctrine, repeated through successive generations, echoed by the leaders of the Evangelical revival, and needing repetition in each succeeding age. If the pulpit becomes sterile, if God seems to forsake His own ordinance, it will be found, not that men are less eloquent, but that they have studied the Word of God more imperfectly. They know less of its harmonies and its hidden wisdom; less even of its very language. They consequently reverse the teaching of 2 Tim. iii. 15-17; they are made less "wise unto salvation;" they have profited less in doctrine, reproof, instruction in righteousness; they are less thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Who shall wonder, then, if this doctrine or that calls them aside; mediæval chimera, or modern unbelief?

But the humble-minded servant of Christ may draw much encouragement from the assurance of this eloquent Father, who may be heard thus to comfort him. You cannot speak eloquently, but you may speak wisely. You must learn the very words of Scripture: rich in them, the poverty of your own language will be of less importance. Your own words may be feeble, they will acquire power from the weight of Scripture testimony. Your own utterance may fail to give pleasure, the proof you allege will gratify the understanding.

But is nothing to be done to help us to speak not only with wisdom but with eloquence? Again, Augustine says, "Yes; read and listen to those who speak not only with eloquence but with wisdom also; eloquence is sweet to hear, wisdom is health." Therefore, saith Scripture, not the multitude of the eloquent, but "the multitude of the wise is the health of the world." Bitter medicines may be needful, unwholesome sweets must be shunned; but if the sweetness may be wholesome, and

the medicine sweet, how much better! Is it not so in the Church? Have not some expounded the Divine utterances not only with wisdom but with eloquence? May not their sweet teaching well occupy our leisure and our study?

The difficulty remains very much where Augustine left it. The revealed wisdom of Holy Scripture for our matter of teaching—the influence of the best models we can find to form the style; so much was known and recommended more than 1400 years ago, and the advice must be repeated still.

But this discussion about the wisdom of Holy Scripture, compared with the human eloquence which is to illustrate and enforce it, raised another inquiry. Is not Holy Scripture eloquent as well as wise? There were "judicious critics" in the last century who thought some apology needful for Shakespeare's style, and looked with compassion on the barbaric art which found expression in the unclassical interior of Westminster Abbey. One of these worthies is said to have published an edition of the Bible in the most polite English of that age. He would hardly sympathize with Augustine's opinion of the style of the sacred writers. "Where I understand them," he says, "it seems to me, that while nothing can be more full of wisdom, nothing can be more eloquent. I venture to say, that those who understand their words rightly will perceive also that they are precisely those which ought to have been used; there is an eloquence which befits youth, and another which befits age. Indeed, nothing ought to be called eloquence which is not in harmony with the position of the speaker. In like manner, there is a peculiar eloquence which becomes those inspired men whose authority is supreme. With this they spake; no other befits them, and it can befit no others."

Our author had said that he would not go back to the schools, and must refer those who needed instruction and criticism, such as they could give, to the teachers of rhetoric. Nevertheless, this inquiry into the eloquence of the sacred writers roused the old spirit within him; and he cannot refrain from some critical discussions akin to those which he had no doubt often carried on with his pupils in his earlier days. "It is not," he says, "so much that every beauty of language found in other works may be paralleled or surpassed in Holy Writ, but that, while eloquence is never wanting, it is never unduly prominent. The words seem not to be the choice of the writer, but to grow, as it were, spontaneously out of the matter. You might imagine Wisdom to be coming forth from her home in the breast of the wise; and Eloquence, like some inseparable attendant, to follow without summons."

Augustine dwells, then, admiringly on passages selected from

the learned St. Paul, and the herdsman Amos (Rom. v. 3-5; 2 Cor. xi. 16-30; Amos vi. 1-6). He points out the climax, the artistic grouping and succession of members of the sentences, the vigorous invective, the march of the majestic language, the beauty of the intonation. Such, he says (c. vii. 21), is a specimen of divine eloquence, not the product of human art, but wisdom blended with eloquence by the mind of God. It is not wisdom aiming at eloquence, but eloquence never departing from wisdom. It has been acutely observed that the rules of oratory existed in the genius of the orator before the grammarian reduced them to formal statement. Is it wonderful, then, that we should detect them exemplified in those whom He sent forth who created genius?

Scripture being thus the subject-matter with which the preacher must deal, what shall he do with its darker portions? Augustine tells us (c. ix. 23) that some passages which the most lucid eloquence can hardly make clear, ought not to be used for popular discourses, unless for some urgent occasion. Such passages are rather to be discussed in books, or in private conversation with sympathetic companions who may bring willingness and capacity to the investigation. Surely a wise admonition! How many preachers venture into depths they have never fathomed, flounder about helplessly for their twenty or thirty minutes, and retire serenely unconscious of the confusion and perhaps doubts they have sown in some listener's brain! A warning against such a result is our next admonition. "Eloquence, if you will, but clearness above all things! There is such a thing, says Cicero, as a purposed negligence, an apparent indifference to polish and to sound in order to use the word which shall be unmistakable." Yet Augustine would not advocate vulgarity, when compelled to abandon ornament, unless, indeed, the African ear should require a good broad provincialism to make it understand. The Salvation Army has carried this to excess, but anecdotes are not wanting of racy country pastors waking up slumbering rustics with some rousing word of their own vocabulary. May not all receive the lesson which follows (c. x. 24)—"To what avail is that fine language which is not understood by the hearer, since the only end of speaking is to be understood? The teacher, therefore, will shun all words which do not teach. If he can find a pure word which his hearers will understand, he will of course prefer it; but if not, he will use language less approved in society, if only he can thus thoroughly teach the very thing he has in view"? We are warned that this consideration is more important in preaching than in conversation, since in the latter case a question may receive the answer which shall clear up an obscurity. We may fear that an English congregation

would scarcely suggest the experience which Augustine (c. x. 25) records. He says that a crowd eager for instruction will show by its movement whether it understands. The speaker must mark that restlessness, and turn the subject from side to side with various illustration, until he perceive the signs of contentment. Then let him pass on, and be careful not to cause weariness by useless iteration. It will be long before our orderly pews give forth these nods of acquiescence or shrugs of doubt. But at any rate we are reminded that the discourse prepared beforehand or committed to memory cannot bend itself to these necessities. Clear, then, the teacher must be, even if he lack brilliancy. "The man of good sense loves not words, but truth in words. What is the use of a golden key if it will not open the door? Why object to a wooden one if it can give us admittance?"

If clearness be so important an element in preaching, has beauty of language no place and no value? Yes, says Augustine (c. xii. 27), quoting Cicero's dictum: "To teach is absolutely necessary; to give pleasure adds sweetness; to sway the hearer is the victory." So, then, the eloquent preacher must please and sway the hearer's mind with the sweetness of his language and the weight of his argument, if the practical end is to be gained. But there is something more powerful still than gifts of oratory. Before any attempt to speak (c. xv. 32), prayer should go up for himself and for those whom he is to address.

The hour is at hand when the preacher is to speak; let him lift up his thirsting soul that he may utter that with which God has filled him. Who can make us say what we ought, and in the way we ought, save Him in whose hand both we and our discourses are?

Shall we then fall back on the promise of the Lord (Matt. x. 19, 20)—"Take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak"? Does that promise cut away the whole ground of all preparation, of all human gifts, and therefore of all such discussions as the one before us? It is a temptation, we fear not to say, directly addressed to the mental indolence of the facile speaker. It belongs to the same class of presumptuous sins which the Saviour repelled when He refused to cast Himself down from the temple-roof. It is not trusting, it is "tempting the Lord our God." What answer does Augustine make to this suggestion? It runs thus: "As well may we refuse to pray, since it is said, 'Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.'" Why should the Apostle Paul have written those Epistles to Timothy and Titus which ought to be before the eyes of all Church teachers, if without premedi-

tation or study we may throw ourselves on the unfailing aid of the Holy Spirit?

In the concluding portion of this book the master discusses the varied styles of language which the Christian speaker should have at his command. He takes as his motto the dictum of the great Roman orator. He is the eloquent man whose delivery is in proportion to the importance of his subject, subdued, even-tempered, or vehement. All things in religion are, indeed, of weighty importance, yet all are not equally solemn or equally soul-stirring, and the language of the preacher ought to reflect these gradations. How much reading and preaching are marred in our day from a want of perception of this obvious necessity! Monotony in one, tasteless emphasis thrown on insignificant words in another, vehement declamatory utterance of insignificant sentences in another, produce much the same effect on the hearer. The first may lull the attention, but the others disgust it through perpetual irritation and purposeless effort. It is doubtful whether much can be done in this respect to improve a speaker, beyond drawing his thoughtful attention to the importance of the subject. If we once feel the speaker to be playing upon his voice, and throwing in his piano and forte passages, his diminuendo and crescendo, as though it were some artificial musical composition, farewell at once to all salutary impression. But when the subject itself masters him, when sustained argument, deep feeling, righteous vehemence, each in its turn brings with it the evenly balanced utterance, the sadder, deeper intonation, the more rapid torrent of expostulation, then Augustine's threefold distinction is at once exemplified and justified. But this, in its higher manifestation, is genius. Yet surely a cultured taste should preserve many more than it does from flagrant departures from that which after all is but natural utterance.

Augustine gives many illustrations of these varied styles of oratory and their several uses. That which may be most interesting is a personal anecdote of his own experience.

It appears that, in a certain Mauritanian town, there were broils very much like the Irish "faction fights," recurring annually, and leading to much loss of life. It was an occasion for a Christian Bishop to interpose, and he seems to have made one of his greatest efforts. "I dealt with them," he says, "with all the power I could command, to pluck from heart and hand this cruel and inveterate evil. I thought I had done nothing when I heard their cheers. But, when I saw them weeping, I felt assured. Their cheers proved mental instruction and pleasure. Their tears showed that they were really influenced. When I saw these I believed that the

savage custom, inherited from distant forefathers, was vanquished at last. And we thanked God together when my sermon was ended. And now, through the aid of Christ, eight years have passed away, and there has been no attempt to renew those atrocities." A great preacher indeed!

But without dwelling longer on these distinctions of style, we are finally warned by an admonition, never out of place (c. xxvii. 59): "Whatever the power of the utterance, the life of the speaker carries yet greater weight." The man whose life echoes his words, desires in his discourse that his hearers should love his teaching rather than his language; he prizes the truth above the manner, and would have the words servants to the teacher, not the teacher to the words. So says the Apostle, "Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." To "strive about words" is not to be careful about truth overcoming error, but about your mode of expression being preferred to that of another. To speak eloquently as well as wisely is to speak the truth in words not rising above the need of plainer passages, more glowing and elegant as the elevation of tone requires, while they shall be vehement where the weight of the subject calls for power. But at least, if a man cannot be both wise and eloquent, let him rather speak wisely what he cannot utter eloquently, than speak eloquently what is but foolishness. If he cannot even do this, then let him so live that his very life may be an example, and his manner of living be itself a continual sermon."

One more subject remains. Human nature is the same in all ages. To phrase it in the vernacular, it is just this: "May a man *crib* his sermon?" It may amuse some to find the same question mooted all those years ago, which meets us so often now.

"Here is a man," says Augustine (c. xxix. 63), "who has a good delivery but no power of composition. May he take the wise and eloquent writings of others, commit them to memory, and preach them to the people?" He may, replies our Bishop, provided that he practise no deception. He must not profess it to be his own, and he must make that which he could not *compose*, become his own by *composing* his own life in accordance with it.

Finally, whether we deliver that which is our own, or that which comes from borrowed sources, prayer must go forth that it may be suitable to those who hear, that the preacher's utterance may be blessed, and the hearing ear given to the people. When the issue has been prosperous, let thanks be ascribed to Him Who gave the discourse. Let him who glories, glory in

Him "in Whose hands are both we and our words" (Wisdom, vii. 16).

In this simple, sensible, pious strain the venerable Bishop of Hippo gave his advice to those who would hear, all those centuries ago. If he has not much that is new to tell to this century on this well-worn subject, neither should we have many new discoveries to reveal to him. It is sufficient for us, and restful to our minds, to observe that there is not a discordant note between us. He has no thought or desire in preaching but to exalt the Word of God; so to handle it as to make it clear to the people; and so to impress it, that they may obey its precepts and accept its teaching. No false doctrine can obtain permanent lodgment in a Church which follows this rule in its pulpits. The saddest sign in our day is the frequent poverty of Scripture preaching, and, too often, its almost utter absence. The cessation from controversy which some crave may be only the stillness of death. If it be the desire of the soul to cease from human war-cries and vexatious bickerings, that it may listen in quietness to the voice of God, there is life in that silence. Some of us would do well to come apart and rest awhile from conflict in that spiritual audience-chamber. So replied Latimer to the scholastic teachers from whom, in middle life, he was escaping. "It is enough for me that Christ's sheep hear no man's voice but Christ's. As for you, ye have no voice of Christ against me, whereas, for my part, I have a heart that is ready to hearken to any voice of Christ that you can bring me. So, fare you well, and trouble me no more from the talking with the Lord my God."

He who has thus "talked with the Lord his God" is the preacher that Latimer was to his own people. He is the preacher Augustine has described. He is the preacher for whom our own age is waiting.

T. P. BOULTBEE.

ART. IV.—LIFE OF BISHOP WILBERFORCE. VOL. III.

Life of the Right Rev. Samuel Wilberforce, D.D., Lord Bishop of Oxford, and afterwards of Winchester. With Selections from his Diaries and Correspondence; by his Son, REGINALD G. WILBERFORCE. Vol. iii. pp. 480. John Murray.

WHATEVER else may be said about the concluding volume of Bishop Wilberforce's "Life," this, at least, will be admitted on all sides—it is interesting in the extreme. The period which its narratives cover—from 1861 to 1873—was