



The Farm and the Fireside.

The History of Sermons.

When shall the world be favored with a history of the pulpit, and who will write it? Such a work is a great desideratum, and well executed, might prove of incalculable value. The world is full of material which only needs to be collected, sifted, and arranged. Let some one of our men of might gird himself for the task.

One chapter in such a work, or perhaps more, should be given to the origin and history of sermons, and curious indeed would be the developments; especially if all their secret history could be made known. Let us give two or three facts, which may go to show somewhat of what we mean.

One of the most popular and beautiful of the sermons of Robert Hall is the one occasioned by the death of the amiable Princess Charlotte, who died 1817—a sermon which he had not even thought of delivering an hour before its commencement. Devoted to his duty, this eminent man looked ahead at a newspaper, and was supremely ignorant of passing events, so that he was entirely ignorant of the time when the Princess was to be buried. The funeral ceremony took place on Wednesday evening, just at the time of Mr. Hall's weekly lecture. Royal benevolence generally have attended paid for the sermon, especially at the hour of its delivery, but the thought never occurred to Mr. Hall that anything more than ordinary service would take place at Hervey Lane.

On his arrival, there, as usual, he held the whole house was lighted up and crowded. "How is this, sir?" asked Mr. Hall of one of the deacons. "What does this crowd mean?" "Why sir, the Princess Charlotte, you know, is buried this evening, and the people are come to hear your funeral sermon for her." "Well, sir, I am very sorry, but I had entirely forgotten it," said Mr. Hall.

Mr. Hall then introduced the service, and I will sit down in my vestry, and endeavor to think of something to say." The substance of the sermon on the topic, which appears in the first volume of his works, was the result of half an hour's reflections; the sermon was afterward written, published, and produced great effects. The widowed prince described it as the best of all sermons sent him on the occasion; and another eminent man says that the production of such a sermon far to account for the mysterious removal of the princess.

Much smaller events than the removal of the great have suggested good sermons. The admirable discourse on "Walking by Faith," the first sermon by Andrew Fuller, owed its origin to a smaller matter. It was delivered at an annual meeting of the Northamptonshire Association, at whose meeting it was printed. Like the sermon of his friend Hall, it was not off to be written till after its delivery. On his way to the Association the road several places was flooded, arising from recent rains, which had made the rivers overflow. Mr. Fuller came to one spot where the water was very deep, and he being a stranger to its exact depth, was unwilling to go on. A plain countryman residing in the neighborhood, better acquainted with the water than the preacher, cried out, "Go on, sir, you are quite safe."

Fuller urged on his horse, but the water soon touched his saddle, and he stopped to think. "Go on, sir, it is right," shouted the man. Taking the man at his word, Fuller proceeded, and the text was suggested, "We walk by faith, not by sight."—National Magazine.

LIGHT READING ABOUT THE EAST.—

The existing relations between Russia and Turkey render every thing respecting those countries peculiarly interesting at the present moment. We, therefore, select the following paragraphs from various works lately published.

THE RUSSIAN PEASANTRY.

Whatever may be the morals of the peasantry in remote districts, those living in the towns and villages on the Volga are more degraded in their habits than any other people of the amount whom I have traveled; and they can hardly be said to disregard, since they have never been acquainted with the common decencies of life. What better results can indeed be expected from a system by which the upper classes are possessed in proportion to the number of serfs who they own. The rapid increase of the population is no less an object with the private serf-owner, than the extensive consumption of ardent spirits is desired by the government.

Thus each vice is privileged with especial patronage. Marriages, in the Russian service, are consummated at an early age, and are arranged by the steward, without consulting the parties—the lord's approval alone being necessary. Our captain had taken his wife on a lease of five years, the rent for that time amounting to fifty rubles, with the privilege of renewal at the expiration of it.

ORGANIZATION OF THE RUSSIAN SERVICE.

When we returned to Sebastopol, not long afterwards, we heard that the Emperor had left the military portion of the community a reminiscence that was calculated to produce a deep impression. He had scarcely completed his great visit, when the Emperor alone being necessary. Our captain had taken his wife on a lease of five years, the rent for that time amounting to fifty rubles, with the privilege of renewal at the expiration of it.

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authorities ascertain from the register kept by the priesthood how many youths there are in the town or village, from twelve to thirty years of age, and whoever has two sons must part with four, the eldest only being left at home.

A party of soldiers surround the house or school in which the youth or youths are, and then take them away by main force, at only a few minutes notice, leaving them not time to say farewell to their friends. In one particular case two youths, one 12 and the other 14, were kidnapped in this way from the house of their grandmother aged 85; where they were stopping on a visit, and perhaps the poor fellows will never see their home again.

THE ARGUMENT TURNED.—

A contemporary—the Christian Age at Cincinnati—thus turns an argument of the Times, of the same city, whose editor opposed the Maine Law ticket on the ground of the right of every body to sell liquor, if every body chooses, and the sanction the Bible gives to such practices:

The editor of the Times complains of impure milk, from cows fed upon artificial slop! He thinks the Council should notice this matter. Come, old man, where do you find any authority for a prohibitory law in the Bible? Remember, sir, you are opposed to the 'inventions of men' and trust in God for your salvation, here and hereafter! No calling upon the council, to compel men to do right! Drink the impure milk, and trust in God for salvation!

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