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"Thy Will be Done."

When sorrow casts its shade around,
And pleasure seems our course to shun;
When naught but grief and care is found,
How sweet to say, "Thy will be done."

When sickness lends its pallid hue,
And every dream of bliss has flown;
When quickly from the fading view,
Recede the joys that once were known,

The soul resigned will still rejoice,
Though life's last sand is nearly run;
With humble faith and trembling voice,
It whispers soft, "Thy will be done."

When called to mourn the early doom
Of one affection held most dear;
While o'er the closing silent tomb,
The bleeding heart distills the tear;

Though love its tribute sad will pay,
And earthly streams of solace shun,
Still, still the humbled soul will say,
In lowly dust, "Thy will be done."

Whate'er, O Lord, thou has designed,
To bring my soul to thee its trust,
If mercies or afflictions kind—
For all thy dealings, Lord, are just—

Take all, but grant in goodness free,
That love which ne'er thy stroke would shun;
Support this heart, and strengthen me
To say in faith, "Thy will be done."

[*Selected.*

Influence of Winter.

Winter has its benefits, which in some respects, far more than compensate its drawbacks.

The following remarks are credited to Rev. Henry Ward Beecher:

"It is not often thought that we owe our habits, and our institutions even, to Winter. We talk about Christianity, and we talk about the spirit of our laws and institutions; but, after all, we do not bear in mind that the reason why Northern nations are more manly than Southern nations, is that there is Winter in the North, and no Winter in the South. And how does Winter make a nation manly? By driving men into social unities, and obliging them to live with each other, and to devise ways for their amusement and instruction. In a mild climate, where there is no necessity for men to dwell under a roof, they wander abroad, and in a great measure dispense with each other's society, so that, although they may have a certain amount of cursory enjoyment, they are comparatively uninstructed. But in a severe climate, like this, when the cold season shuts men out from the field, and they retreat from their ordinary avocations, and the days are short, and the evenings are long, the dwelling becomes a castle and a school-house; and there must be not only labors, but conversations and readings. Under such circumstances, the family is a centre of knowledge, and, if there is any Christian leaven in it, a centre of Christianization. The shortening of days and the lengthening of evenings, make a great difference in the civilization of nations; and I think it may be said that New England, and all the Northern States, owe as much to the fact that they have a long Winter, as to any of their laws or institutions; it gives rise to such household education, such domestic culture.

"Then, more than that, there is health in Winter. Some men shrink under it, and are injured by it; but most men are renovated by it. For I think that, largely, the human constitution, like nature, is refreshed in Winter. The ground rests, and the trees rest. You know there is a sleep, as it is called by vegetable physiologists, of plants. They must have repose, and Winter is the period in which it is provided for them. And they are reinvigorated, though not in the same way, yet just as really, as man is, by the Winter season. He is made more wholesome and more strong under its influence. A man who lives perpetually in Summer, is not usually half so vigorous as a man who spends a portion of the year amidst the rigors of Winter.

"There is, also, during the whole of our winter, a silent work going on that always fills me with pleasing surprise. A row of trees before your house may be considered, all Winter long, as mute workmen, because except in the extremest cold weather there is not a day in which there is not a slow and silent suction of the roots and of the tissues, by which, through the whole Winter, the trees are gathering their fill of sap. And that is one reason why, in high Northern latitudes, where the Winter is very long, the trees, when the Spring comes, burst out into vegetation almost in a day, and are full-orbed almost as soon as the least degree of warmth touches them.

"The image is very suggestive. It may easily be applied to man in a moral point of view. Men that stand in the Winter of trouble, and are patient and enduring, are like trees in Winter. They do not leave out; they show no great signs of growth, but inwardly they are being filled. Elements of manliness are developing in them. Blessed are those men that know how to bear the Winter of trouble. By-and-by, when prosperity comes to them, they will blossom out all of a sudden, and most gloriously."

For the Presbyterian Banner.

The Pentateuch Vindicated vs. Colenzo, by Prof. Green.

The Zulu Bishop has made quite a flurry by his impudent and unprincipled assault upon the Scriptures; and but for this monstrous impiety he would scarcely have been heard of. His name has become a disgust, and the only question in serious minds was, whether he was entitled to notice, considering that his objections against the Mosaic record were only a poor rehash of the Deistical cavils long since refuted.

Very few of his books have obtained currency here. But we learn that in some of the frontier districts, far West, they find a better sale. It is well that Dr. Green has given his reply a popular cast. It is an off-hand rejoinder suited to the occasion, and calculated to have currency with those who would not read a purely critical answer. He takes up the objections *seriatim*, and disposes of them through and through, to the satisfaction of any candid mind. The difficulty is, that they who hanker after such flimsy objections will not be satisfied by any reasonable refutation, but will cling to the fallacies though thrice exploded. In several instances, any of half a dozen explanations should suffice. In the first item, about the family of Judah, it would be enough to say that the historian has *given us notice* that he meant the number *seventy* to be understood not literally, but constructively, for a purpose. And Colenso has himself, in one place, so admitted; answering thus fully his own leading objection to the Mosaic record.

In case of the sojourn and multiplication of the people, we think the shorter period upon which the Bishop bases his calculation, might rather have been conceded. The two hundred and fifteen years are ample for making out the two and a half millions, and without understanding the fourth generation of four hundred years. Indeed otherwise, the Professor could make out double the requisite number, with the aid of the preternatural element in the calculation, and those additional considerations which he names, since the two hundred and fifteen years would give the full amount on the basis of a natural calculation.

The Professor has more than answered the Bishop; and any one who cares to follow the South African prelate through his mazy criticisms in the interest of infidelity and heathenism, will need no other antidote to the Bishop's bane than this book. Considering that the reply of the Bishop's fellow Churchman in this country, Prof. Mahan, of New-York, is so weak and so full of shameful concessions as to do far more harm than good, we are the more gratified that Prof. Green has done the needed work; and here let the Bishop rest, and "*his Bishopric let another take.*"

J.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Rules for Hearing.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—In a former article I promised some suggestions for a more profitable hearing of the Word preached. I make a few, not claiming that they are the most important, much less that they exhaust the subject. Many more might be given.

1. Judge for yourself whether what the preacher says be true. "Prove all things." We are not priests, nor are your consciences bound. Free inquiry and untrammeled thought are boons purchased too dearly to be quietly ignored now. Truth, too, is too precious to be taken on hearsay. We dare not commit our souls to human guardianship. We are to judge whether words we hear from pulpits be true or not. The preacher *may* utter pestilent heresy. Be sure *you* are not deceived by it and ruined also. Settle your faith for yourself by an earnest heart-struggle, and you will enter the church to listen as for your life! Sit in judgment on what you hear and you will be compelled to listen.

2. Bring your Bible with you to church, and read while the preacher reads; and *keep* your Bible open while he preaches, to see whether he speaks according to the Book. This will make *him* more careful as well as you. He will quote more Scripture, and give chapter and verse, when he finds the people beginning to examine for themselves. We will have more expository preaching, too, and so, better preaching. Let a preacher stand up in the pulpit and begin to go off in this dashing, declamatory style so common and so popular, (common because popular,) and let his eye fall on some thoughtful, earnest man, with his *Bible open* before him, and how soon it will curb his impetuosity and make him guarded, calm, and thoughtful, for there is a man listening, and *thinking* while he listens! Thinking hearers make thinking preachers. Open Bibles in our pews will call out Bible sermons from our pulpits. Do not forget to hear with your open Bible in your hand. It will do preacher and hearer both good.

3. Listen carefully throughout the discourse. A broken chain is worth nothing, and neither is broken thought. You mark the place in a book when interrupted in reading, that you may begin where you left off. You cannot do this in a sermon; the preacher goes right on, and if your mind has been anywhere else than on his words, what he says when you begin to listen again will have no meaning in it. When anything hangs by a chain, one link broke anywhere, all is gone. Modern sermons are only about a half hour long, and anybody can listen *that* long if he has any interest at all in listening. And there are few discourses uttered from the pulpit which are not worth listening to. I am bound to confess that I have seldom heard a preacher to whom I did not feel it a privilege to listen for half an hour. Resist every inclination to bow your head, or turn your back, or close your eyes, or—open your mouth! He who does any of these unnecessarily, has done a serious harm. Great events sometimes turn on very little things, and I have known searching truth blunted by the rattle of a stove or the scrape of a foot! Common politeness demands respectful attention from *all* hearers, without exception. If it is unpardonable rudeness to sleep, or yawn, or turn your back on the person who is speaking to you in the home circle, much more is it in the sanctuary where God speaks. Think of this.

4. Reflect on what you have heard after you go home. Verify the doctrine; fix the impression; weave the truth about your heart, interlace its threads as the very warp and woof of your soul. Always take *texts* home, and divisions, and great outlines of thought, and think them over, pray them over and follow them out into all their legitimate consequences. See whether they are practical—having a bearing on life's great duties and trials. Be in earnest to get good from what you hear, and if you have seen your own face in the glass as you never did before, do not get angry and imagine somebody has been telling the preacher all about you, and so, neutralize the effect of faithful preaching. If you saw yourself, in the sermon, an unforgiven sinner or an unfaithful professor, do not forget it, or neglect it. Arrange all the great truths of the sermon, Sabbath evening, as landmarks to guide you during the week.

5. *Practice* what you hear. Really *do* it. This is the great matter—to be *doers* of the *work*, not mere hearers of the Word. James says that whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his *deed*. One of the fallacies of the day is, that we are blessed in the hearing; James says we are blessed in the doing! There is no special blessing in hearing Repentance preached, but there is in repenting. There is no blessing in hearing Charity preached; there is in being charitable. Let us seize this idea; hearing is not an end, but a *means* to an end. We *hear*, that we may *do*. Let our people understand this principle, and act upon it in our churches.

Now would it not be a simple rule, and a good one, to say, each Sabbath morning, "Whatever right thing my pastor tells me to do this day, I'll do it; and whatever Christian grace he enjoins upon me to cultivate, I'll cultivate that grace." That would be a very simple rule; and acted upon faithfully, our friends would not know us at the end of the year! Would that the fallacy were shattered to atoms, which makes our people sit down in the belief that some great blessing is bound up in simply hearing the Word! My brother, the only blessing for you is in *doing the work!*

H.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Deceitful Excuses.

JER. VIII: 5—"Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? They hold fast deceit, they refuse to return."

Backsliders love their backsliding, and make many excuses for not returning unto God. One of these deceitful excuses is, "We are altogether dependent upon Divine grace; if God does not keep us, and bring us back when we wander, we cannot help it. We can do nothing; we must wait." This is deceit, indeed. One would think it would require an effort to hold it fast. It is an abuse of the doctrine of dependence. The Christian's dependence upon God is much like the husbandman's dependence; it does not exclude, but includes, the duty of activity and exertion, and the use of means. The husbandman does not expect a harvest without labor; and the Christian need not expect to grow in grace without watchfulness and diligence. He is to press toward the mark for the prize. He is to persevere unto the end if he would be saved. And the backslider must return to God, if he wishes God to return to him. Let him no longer hold fast this deceit and refuse to return; let him turn now, repent and do his first works.

Another deceit is, that God can carry on his work and extend his kingdom without us. True, he can. But remember the evil Achan caused Israel. God has said, I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil. Observe what they say in their hearts: The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil. This is the pretence of the backslider: God can carry on his work and extend his kingdom without me; he will not do good because of my prayers and efforts, neither will he do evil or forbear to do good if I do not labor in his cause and pray for its success. But God will punish them who say this in their hearts, and of course he will punish them who say it in their lives. The backslider who holds fast this deceit and refuses to return, will reap the reward of his doings. They who refuse to labor in the vineyard of Christ may be addressed in the language of Robert Hall, "We extend to you our cordial commiseration in that you were predestinated to be sluggards in the kingdom of God, for you have made your calling and election sure!"

W. J. M.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Rev. Dr. Sunderland.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—*Sirs*—Some time ago you published a letter, (I have lost the paper,) which said some hard things of Dr. Sunderland, of Washington City. At the time, you made some question of the justice of the charges. The Dr. was charged with preaching abolition sermons, and delivering, from the pulpit, tirades against the South. I have heard the Dr. preach three or four sermons this Winter—two on the condition of the country, or on the war. None of these were abolition sermons, or tirades against the South, nor was the South abused. They were both excellent sermons; one of them I was particularly pleased with. I set it down as the best I had heard on the subject. And, Dr., I have heard more sermons than ever you have, leaving your own out of the count. He but once referred to slavery, as chief among our National sins, for which we were suffering this calamity.

You may judge better of the character of the sermon, when you are informed that it was preached soon after the battle of Fredericksburg, and from the following text: Jeremiah xxv: 15, 16.—"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel to me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink it, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them."

This sermon was preached after the battle of Fredericksburg, when things looked dark—dark to reflecting men. An experienced, and an impressive preacher, and one well informed in politics, said, in reference to our National affairs, "Things look *dark, dark, dark.* It seems as it God would shake the Nation to pieces. I would not dare utter my forebodings in public."

"Few, in the Northern States, have a conception of the desolations of this war, or of the anxiety and forebodings of reflecting and Christian men. Not all reflect how terribly we are in the hand of a severely just, but a merciful God. Not all, I fear, earnestly appeal to that God, or sufficiently feel the need of his arising for the help of our Nation. The sermon I speak of, I should like to see published.

H.

April, 1863.

Testimony in Favor of Books.

CAMP NEAR FALMOUTH, VA.,
March 7th, 1863.

DEAR BROTHER:—That most valuable box of books did not reach us in camp until day before yesterday, March 5th. This long detention was between this and Washington. It, however has come all safe, and no doubt at the right time. Its precious contents are to us a real God-send. For long weeks it could be truly said, we had no reading matter. Those who are accustomed and love to read, are literally hungering and thirsting after mental food. The careless and ungodly even were desirous for something—*anything*—to read, in order to while away a listless hour.

I do most sincerely wish you had been with me for at least one day after the box was opened. What a constant stream of comers! With what eagerness and satisfaction each obtained a book and returned to his little shelter tent to read. In a letter (which see,) just sent to the *United Presbyterian*, the reception of the books and mode of distribution is spoken of.

The distribution has not been confined to members of our own regiment. Many from adjoining regiments, hearing of our arrival, have come, and all share alike. The smaller books, pamphlets, and tracts, are yet principally with me. On to-morrow (Sabbath,) my purpose is to take packages of these, and go to the various tents in our own and other regiments, in order to distribute them.

Since those books have come, I am still more convinced of the propriety of sending to the soldier reading matter of a superior kind—as we did in that box—books well bound and of approved kinds. Hundreds and thousands in the camp, who at home, being men of education and taste, were accustomed to read books of approved literature, both religious and secular, have many of them not had a book—not even the old Testament—to read for more than a year. You can then imagine with what eagerness many of those I brought were seized upon, and are now being eagerly and profitably read. I know the objection to sending bound volumes, also the entire Bible, to the soldiers, is, they will not preserve or carry them on the march. This, with some, may be true; the careless will throw away or leave behind any kind of a book. But those who value the Bible, or a well selected book, will abandon them only among the last things, on a march.

To yourself receive mine and our soldiers' thanks for the share you had in getting us these invaluable treasures. To all who contributed to them, if in your power, convey our heartfelt thanks, assuring them that almost every book is at this moment doing good service for the Master.

A. M. STEWART.

John Culbertson.

For the Presbyterian Banner.

Presbytery of Sangamon.

The Presbytery of Sangamon met at Decatur on Wednesday, April 1st, 1863, and after a sermon by the Moderator, was constituted by prayer.

Eight ministers and seven Ruling Elders were present.

S. M. Wilson was elected Moderator, and R. Livingston, Temporary Clerk.

Rev. C. P. Jennings was dismissed to the Presbytery of Logansport. Presbytery passed the following with reference to Brother Jennings:

Resolved, That the unanimous and hearty thanks of this Presbytery be tendered to the Rev. C. P. Jennings, for his very faithful and successful services as Stated Clerk of this body.

The pastoral relation existing between Rev. T. M. Oviatt and the Church in Decatur, was dissolved at the request of Brother Oviatt.

Commissioners to the General Assembly: Rev. T. M. Oviatt, and Elder S. G. Malone were elected principals; Rev. J. G. Bergen, D. D., and Elder J. F. Bergen, alternates.

Presbytery adjourned to meet at Centre, on the last Tuesday of September, 1863.

G. W. F. BIRCH,
Stated Clerk.

EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENCE.

Lord Russel and "Recognition"—Sheriff Alison's Opinion—Pro-Union Meeting at Woolwich—"Art of Preaching," by Dr. Begg—His Illustrations per contra—Elocution and "Read Sermons"—"Readings," by Kean, at Glasgow—Free Church Students and Preachers—Death of the Rev. Dr. Tweedie, of Edinburgh.

March 27, 1863.

LORD RUSSEL, in reply to Lord Strathedan, has denied that it is either the intention or desire of the British Government to mediate on American affairs, and affirms that never did England recognise any revolting nation except where liberty had been achieved over oppression, and hints that as the South retains men in bondage, he has no desire to take steps which would be "unfriendly" to the United States. These, I can truly say, are the sentiments generally entertained. All are agreed that unless invited, England should not offer mediation in the terrible conflict now being waged, and which everybody believes the North will pursue to the last extremity. The matter is in God's hands, and he will show us what his will is, in due time. Since I came to Glasgow, I have had the opportunity of hearing what Sir. A. Alison, the well-known historian, said soon after the contest broke out. Addressing an assembly of gentlemen, he predicted that the struggle evoking such strong passions, would be, not shortlived, as most thought, but bitter, continuous, and practical, very much in the spirit of the old border warfare between the Scots and the English. The *Daily News* correspondent at New-York, writes that the South must be subdued by mere exhaustion, even if it won every battle. There has been a pro-Northern meeting held at Woolwich, addressed by the chaplain of the *George Griswald* and a colored American minister.

"THE ART OF PREACHING," is the title of a pamphlet lately issued from the Edinburgh press. Its author is the Rev. James Begg, D.D., a well-known Free Church minister. The object is to set forth "The Duty of the Church toward her Theological Students," in other words, "to secure a thorough practical training in the art of efficient public speaking." Dr. Begg embodies in this pamphlet a speech delivered by him before the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh. In his prefatory remarks he says that "the people expected not only the best principles, but the best preachers, as the result of the Disruption; that so it was at first, but inasmuch as the Church scarcely makes the art of preaching a matter of study, she is not securing to any considerable extent, a class of men to take the place of those who are passing away. Nothing but making soundness of doctrine and pulpit power the grand points to be studied in humble dependence on the spirit of Christ will make the Free Church flourish. * * It seems to be supposed that if a man has the knowledge of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, theological and other science, he must needs be an efficient minister, although he has never, properly speaking, had a single lesson in the art of communicating that knowledge to others by oral address. The Scriptures declare that a minister should be 'apt to teach,' but we satisfy ourselves by drilling men in the art of *taking in* knowledge, without any anxiety as to the equally important part of giving it out. In a word, we confine ourselves to making them scholars and theologians, but leave it almost entirely to circumstances whether they will ever be effective public teachers and preachers—the grand object, after all, of all their previous training."

The charge, then, brought against *our* section of the Church of Christ, by one of its own ablest ministers and most eloquent and effective preachers, applies with much force to many other Churches. Emphatically it is true of the Church of England, whose Universities totally neglect the training in elocution, or the art of training, the future clergy of the National Church. Hence *preaching* or even *reading* power is rare. Some of the best orators in the Church of England, learnt elocution when they had little or no thought of becoming preachers. So was it with the once youthful and accomplished Hugh McNeil (now Dr. McNeil of Liverpool, and Canon of Chester,) and also with the Rev. Mr. Bellew, D. C. L., a highly oratorical preacher in London. Both these men, too, as also Canon Boyd, of Paddington, and Dr. Magee, Rector of Enneswellen (formerly of London, and son of the celebrated Archbishop of Dublin who wrote on the Atonement, and Sacrifice of Christ,) were Irishmen, and it is quite true that the Irish clergy bear the palm over their English Episcopal brethren. In fact as a rule, they use no notes at all, or very short ones, and do not write their sermons. The effect of non-reading on an English congregation is very winning, attractive, and impressive. Hence, when the late Dr. Sumner (formerly Bishop of Chester,) introduced a large number of Irish clergy into the North of England, what between the living Gospel they preached, and the fervent, natural, unconstrained way in which, simply opening a little pocket Bible, they preached, marvellous results were achieved both among rich and poor, in the manufacturing districts.

As to the Independents, their students do receive not so much preliminary *training*, as *practice*, in public speaking. They go out from the Colleges in London, Cheshurst, Rotheram, (Yorkshire,) and other places, as "supplies" for vacant pulpits, or as village preachers, on the Lord's day. They thus learn to speak naturally, and are *warmed to the work* which lies before them; so that, not like a boy who, bathing in the sea for the first time, "starts and shivers" in the shallows, and makes his first plunge into deep water with something like a scream of terror, and all his nerves agitated—but like the practised swimmer who buffets and surmounts old ocean's billows with delight; such a practised preacher has got the art and aptness (in measure at least,) to teach and to preach. Still, in Dissenting Colleges, I fear, *elocution*, as such, is little studied, and very seldom are students obliged to preach *memoriter* (or *quasi* extempore,) before the Theological Professor and his fellow students.

To a certain extent, Presbyterian students do give discourses during their theological course, but they, as a rule, *read* instead of *speaking* them. At Belfast, the Theological Professor, of the General Assembly, requires preaching, not reading; and Dr. Henry Cooke reads lectures to the students on the art of delivery and pulpit elocution.

The *Wesleyans* have none but *extemporaneous* preachers, in the sense of oral address, (from previous study, no doubt, as a rule,) and the preacher looking direct at his congregation. This, I firmly believe, has been one great secret of the power of the Wesleyan pulpit. Most if not all the preachers have been first engaged (and that from the promptings of their own zeal,) as lay-preachers; then, after a time, they are obliged, if they set their faces toward the ministry, to undergo trial and a *hearing* before ministers, and probably also District Stewards and other officers, and *their* approval must be obtained ere they are allowed to go on circuit. *Probationers* thus become *preachers*; and finally the Conference, after examinations, ordains and sets them apart to their work. Yet, even in the new Wesleyan Colleges, I am not aware that there is any formal and vigilant training as to elocution and delivery. Still, the students are expected, and if they would prove acceptable must seek, (and succeed in measure, at least,) to be *popular* in their style of delivery and address. True there is mannerism, (every denomination, I suppose, has its manners,) and the Wesleyan tone is sometimes either whining or shouting, but *that* is the exception rather than the rule.

Reading sermons undoubtedly secures accuracy and refinement, and to an eclectic class it is preferable, especially if the preacher who does not *read*, has evidently not *written*, or in other words, not studied and thought out his theme of discourse. It is to be granted, also, that the task of committing sermons verbatim to memory is, and must be, to some, an intolerable burden. Also, let us admit freely that many read their sermons admirably and effectively. Chalmers did not lose his fire, nor was he deprived of "the tempest and whirlwind of his passion," because his eye swiftly scanned the written traces of "the thoughts that burned." But his and other cases, where the calm philosopher and theologian in one, may discourse in sententious utterances which are weighty and powerful, do *not* alter the general proposition and *fact*, that really popular preaching is that which, without reading, comes forth fresh, warm and burning from the heart and lips of the preacher.

The people in Scotland, the more evangelical their sympathies, have the more liked extemporaneous address, and disliked the reading of sermons. He refers with approbation to the United Presbyterian and the Reformed Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, (and here I supplement what I have said as to *other* Churches already,) and says that in their Divinity Halls "every young man is obliged to repeat his sermons without reading."

As to "mere prejudice" against read sermons, he maintains that if a sermon were merely an address to the understanding, it would make little difference; but a sermon is also an address to "the feelings and the conscience," and that being the case, is a *delivered* sermon; if it is well done, the preacher has the whole advantage of conveying and quickening his meaning by means of the human eye; he has the advantage more readily of the contact of mind with mind when he is looking toward his people, and his people's look is directed toward him. He relates how he once heard a man who was asked whether he remembered what the minister had been preaching about, and he replied, "It is not to be thought of that I could mind the sermon when the minister could not mind (remember) it himself." He quotes also the Bishop of Durham, who says that an unwritten sermon is best for the masses, and who quotes from "Guesses at Truth" the question, "What do the clergy lose by reading their sermons?" and the answer, "They lose preaching—the preaching of the voice in many cases, *the preaching of the eye almost always.*" Dr. Begg also quotes from one of Burns's poems, the following:

"Has Robertson again grown weel,
To preach and *read?*
'Na, waur than a!' cries ilka chiel,
'Tam Samson's dead!'"

In like manner Dr. Begg quotes other satirical passages from Burns. Thus, a preacher who reads and who yet wishes to appear as delivering his discourse *extempore*, is thus dealt with:

"He slipp'd the Bible in the dark,
Thocht nane wad see;
Awa' with sicean smuggled wark,
Its na' for me;
And thinking he wad no be seen,
Did something in the Bible preen,
But ah! there were owre mony e'en
On him that glanced,
And ca'ed it weak and unco mean
What he advanced.

"I never liked sermon-readin',
It's but a dry and sapless feedin';
Sae tell your chiel for be heedin'
If he come back,
His sermons dress in other cleedin,
Than white and black."

There is no doubt that the popular feeling is against reading sermons, and yet it is undoubtedly true that some of the very ablest and most acceptable preachers do preach from notes or read from first to last. Thus it is with Drs. Caird and McDuff; thus was it with Dr. Chalmers himself, but his was reading, and *something more*—"the eye in fine frenzy rolling," the whole frame convulsed with emotion, and a flood-tide ever rising of vehement and overpowering eloquence.

Elocution, and the study of it, would practically solve this difficulty. If a man writes a sermon really *ad populum*, and adapted to the mass; if he illustrate as well as argue; if he appeal at once to the conscience, the heart, and the head: and if all is crowned with reading, yet not *cold*, but warm, earnest, natural, as if spoken, the effect will be excellent. Elocution may degenerate into something very contemptible, in the way of grimace; but when to natural feeling is added such a measure of art as was presented even in the *reading of Scripture* by the late James Sheridan Knowles, there can be no doubt at all that the impression is increased tenfold.

A journal comments on recent "Readings" of Shakespeare, given in a Scottish city, by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean in presence of ministers and religious professors, who would not for any consideration attend a theatre. It says that these things ought to lead to "an improvement in the delivery of our public speakers," and then adds:

"Fancy the thrilling effect of the Scriptures, if read as Kean reads Shakespeare, or recites Macaulay! And why should we not have it so? Is it right and proper that every book for public reading should have justice done to it except the Bible? and that while every other subject is allowed the advantage of a natural and impressive delivery, religion (which is the most important subject of all) should be denied it? The monstrous fallacy with which well-meaning but obtuse people have been beguiled, or have beguiled themselves, is, that such reading and recitation would be 'theatrical,' and that theatrical exhibitions are not becoming in the House of God. To this hollow and ridiculous fallacy may be traced most of the execrable pulpit reading and delivery that rob the read Scriptures of half their power, and have made the dullness of a sermon proverbial. What is it to be theatrical, in the true sense, but to be natural? The actor's aim is to speak with such tones and gestures as one would naturally employ in the supposed circumstances, and a good actor is just an actor whose speaking and gesticulating is natural. For a man, therefore, to read the Scriptures or recite a sermon otherwise than as a good actor would do it, is just to do it *unnaturally*.

"The question, therefore, resolves itself into this—Whether should the Bible be read and sermons be preached in a natural or unnatural manner? If the design of sermons be to send people asleep—which is often their practical effect—then, the less we have of so-called 'theatrical,' or, in other words, natural and effective delivery, the better. Set Kean to read the song of Miriam, or the fight between David and Goliath, or the story of the Prodigal Son, or Christ's denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees, or to recite one of Chalmers' sermons, and you will see the people who had begun adjusting themselves in the corners of the seats for their accustomed snooze, sit up and listen, to the very close, with eager eye and bated breath. And this, simply because Kean would do the piece justice—that is, read it naturally, and as it claims to be read."

The article—of which one may say that while, as in Dr. Begg's speech and pamphlet, there may be exaggeration, there is something in it worthy of consideration—concludes thus:

"Let it not be supposed that we ask for ranting preachers. The fact is, that the study of the best models of elocution and gesticulation—and it is this that we would urge upon our students and public speakers—would not only stimulate the dull, lifeless, somniferous preacher to a more animated style of delivery, but would bring back to propriety those who have rushed into the other extreme, and who roar and rant without any regard to nature. To this class the individual must have belonged who was described by the old Scotch wife as 'an awfu' poo'erfu' preacher, because, as she expressed it, he had 'battered doon the pulpit desk and knocked the guts cleant out o' twa Bible.' From such powerful preaching may we be preserved. 'For O!' as Hamlet said, 'it offends the soul to hear a robustious fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise; I would have such fellows whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod; pray you avoid it.'

"What we want in our pulpits and on our platforms is that truth to nature which our best actors have spent their lives in seeking to attain, and which a careful attention to their performances will help others also to acquire."

The Free Church students of Glasgow have passed resolutions thanking Dr. Begg for his expressed views (as already indicated), and also urge upon him the duty of seeking from the General Assembly such arrangements as shall give probationers an opportunity of being heard in the pulpits where vacancies have occurred. In some bodies the probationers revolve, as it were, round all the Presbyteries of the Church; in the Free Church, a young man must remain within the bounds of his own Presbytery, unless he is specially sought after and invited, or else recommended as a suitable candidate for a church without a pastor.

THE LATEST bereavement of the Free Church is the death of the Rev. Dr. Tweedie, of Edinburgh, minister of a large congregation, a most profitable and practical writer and author, and for a series of years Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee. His health had been sinking (from overwork and fever) for some years. I saw him with his children at the General Conference, in 1861. He rallied after his Continental trip, but only for a time. He expired in his 60th year.

J. W.

The Old Water-Wheel.

BY THE REV. JOHN TODD, D. D.

As you go up to the top of the hill just before you come in sight of the lake, you see at the left a great, long high factory. It is a huge building; and in it are spindles, by thousands, looms by scores, carding machines, and twisting machines, and I know not what. All around are the small buildings where they scour and clean, and color and dry the wool, before it fairly reaches the factory. But when it comes out, it is beautiful broadcloth, or light blue for soldiers, or drab for the Friends, cassimeres for common folks, or gay and splendid articles for the ladies.

Once upon a time when all the men were busy, and the owners were pressed for goods, and every loom was rattling and every spindle was buzzing, and every machine was at work as for life—all of a sudden, the great water-wheel stopped! It was down under the factory, enclosed in a great room, so that no one could fall under it and be crushed by it. He stopped—the old wheel stopped! The men cried, "What now!" The girls at the looms all looked at each other, and every one looked confounded. The owner of the factory was sent for in haste. He came at once, and running down stairs, opened a little door, and looked in upon the wheel. He could see nothing out of the way. Just then he heard a groan—"Oh, dear!" said the wheel.

"Old wheel, what's the matter? What makes you stop?"

"Stop! Why, I am tired!"

"Tired of what?"

"Tired of turning round, to be sure! Why, sir, I've been shut up in this cold, dark room, with the water dashing on me and drenching me for more than twenty years! I have not seen the sun-light nor smelt the fresh air all that time! Who would not be tired! Here I've been turning round and round, till I've grown dizzy, and can't tell which is my head or which is my feet! I have not heard a word to cheer or praise me all this time! Besides, I've done no good to the world. I might as well be dead. All I have done is to pull that great leather strap (band) round and round. The fact is, I am tired and discouraged, and don't mean to whirl round any more!"

"But, my good fellow," said the owner, "if you knew you were doing *good*, and *great good*, then, would you cheerfully move on again?"

"To be sure I would."

"Listen then!"

The old wheel listened and heard a great cry of poor workmen and their children, saying, "Oh, what shall we do for bread? We are cut off from work and wages, and poor Tommy has no shoes, and the baby is sick and must have the doctor; and poor, lame Eldra must have some crutches!—what *shall* we do, if the old wheel won't go any more?"

And then came a loud shout from a whole regiment of soldiers far away from home on the field of battle. They were young men who had left their homes to save their country at the hazard of life. They had been there so long, that they had worn out their clothing, and were suffering from cold. The shout arose at the sight of several great wagons loaded with clothing—made at this factory, and by this very wheel! "God be praised! Our clothes have come! bless the men who made them, even to the factory and the old *water-wheel* that moved all"—shouted the men. "Oh, mother, mother!" cried a poor ragged boy in the city, "do see what a pair of trowsers the kind lady has given me! How warm and nice! Shan't I now feel warm! How glad I am!"

"I'm a poor old man, madam. My children are all dead, as you know. I am feeble, and have no home which I can call mine. But the warm coat you have sent me is a treasure! I know very well the mill where it was made! I once worked in it. May God bless you for your kindness!"

"Oh, sir," sobbed a poor little girl, "the day was very cold, when they buried my poor, widowed mother! They put her into the cold ground, but I was comforted when the lady came and put a warm flannel shroud on her. I know it did not really make her warm, but it *seemed* so to me, and I cried for joy!"

"Enough, enough!" cried the old water-wheel, as the tears trickled down over every wrinkle in his face, "I'm *not* useless! I *am* doing good, and I will go on, never again to stop till I'm worn out! I see how it is. God has so arranged things that we all can help others, and even those who are lowly and not seen, may be a great power—like the power of prayer—to bless the world. Good morning, Mr. Campbell. You will never hear me complaining again."

Then the old water-wheel began to turn round, and the spindles to whirl, and the looms to clatter, and the people smiled and looked happy—and I have never heard of his stopping since!—*S. S. Times.*

Solemn Thought.

Richard Baxter once said, "I seldom hear the bell toll for one; that is dead, but conscience asks me, 'What hast thou done for the saving of that soul before it left the body? There is one more gone into eternity. What dost thou do to prepare him for it? And what testimony must be given to the Judge concerning thee?'"