

streams, whether visible or invisible, the wildest specimens being found where some perennial fountain, as a glacier or snow-bank or moraine spring sends down its waters across a rough sheet of soil in a dissipated web of feeble, oozing currentlets. These conditions give rise to a meadowy vegetation, whose extending roots still more fully obstruct the free, concentrated flow of the waters, and tend to dissipate them out over a wider area. Thus the moraine soil requisite for the better class of meadow plants and the necessary moisture are at times combined about as perfectly as if smoothly outspread on a level surface. Where the soil happens to be composed of the finer qualities of glacial detritus and the water is not in excess, the nearest approach is made by the vegetation to that of the tropical lake-meadow. But where, as is more commonly the case, the soil is coarse and bowldery, the vegetation is correspondingly rank and flowery. Tall, wide-leaved grasses take their place along the sides, and rushes and nodding carices in the wetter portions, mingled with the most beautiful and imposing flowers,—orange lilies and larkspurs seven or eight feet high, lupines, senecios, aliums, painted-cups, many species of mimulus and penstemon, the ample boat-leaved *veratrum alba*, and the magnificent alpine columbine, with spurs an inch and a half long. At an elevation of from seven to nine thousand feet flowers frequently from the bulk of the vegetation; then the hanging meadows become hanging gardens.

In rare instances we find an alpine basin the bottom of which is a perfect meadow, and the sides nearly all the way round, rising in gentle curves, are covered with moraine

soil, which, being saturated with melting snow from encircling fountains, gives rise to an almost continuous girdle of down-curving meadow vegetation, that blends gracefully into the level meadow at the bottom, thus forming a grand green mountain nest with a flowery border.

But commonly the hanging meadows come sweeping down through the woods into the lake levels in ribbon strips, leaving the trees along their margins beautifully revealed. It is in meadows of this sort that the water-rat makes his curious homes, excavating snug chambers beneath the sod, digging canals, and turning the gathered waters from channel to channel to suit his convenience, and harvesting the gay vegetation for food, cutting it off, and gathering it in bunches with the heads all one way, like handfuls of culled flowers.

Another species of hanging meadow or bog is found upon densely timbered hillsides, where small perennial streams have been dammed at short intervals by the fall of trees.

Yet another species is found depending from moist tableds down sheer granite precipices, pricked full of bright houstonias; while corresponding vertical meadows rise from the feet of the precipices to meet them, like stalactite and stalagmite.

And there are three species of pot-hole meadows, one found along the sides of the main streams, another on the summits of ridges, and the third out on bare, shining glacier pavements; all of them extremely interesting in every way. But enough has been said, perhaps, to give a hint of the fine beauty that lies hid in the wildernesses of the California Alps.

"TO THE CLERGY."

I HAD but just finished writing an article in the November number of this magazine, concerning "Parsons and Parsons"; the ink was not dry on the hopeful sentences with which I had endeavored gracefully to round off some playful discussions, when a circular came to me through the mails, addressed "To the Clergy." Now, when a document begins with this respectful, flattering, and even reverent, expression,—“to the clergy,”—I infer that I am about to be called on to offer prayers for something, to

preach on some popular reform, or—what is more likely—to take a collection for some charity whose merit is only surpassed by its impecuniosity. But this circular inclosed a sample of black tricot, and begged to call my attention to the full line of ready-made “clerical suits” offered by a well-known merchant-tailor house in New York. This house is ready to put you into a suit that shall say to every man who sees you: “I am not a common man, but a man of God,—a kind of Burmese sacred white elephant to

be treated gingerly. Please hide your wickedness lest it shock my delicate clerical nerves. Gentlemen never swear in my presence, any more than they smoke where there are ladies."

And this clerical suit—this "outward sign of an inward grace"—is to be had for twenty-two dollars. It is a great deal for a tailor to do for so little money. And then, this sacred tricot is kept ready made up in all sizes, for fat clergymen and lean, for little parsons and tall ones. But that is not all; for, further on, we read: "Less our usual clerical discount of ten per cent." Ah! then a parson is not only a man to whom common Gentiles must doff their hats, but to whom there must be made a "clerical discount." Because he is poor, perhaps? But my washerwoman is poor, and I never heard that any benevolent tailor or slop-shop keeper offers her a discount on her boy's trowsers. Besides, ministers as a class are not poor,—some of us are not even poor in spirit. If we do not get rich, we are generally paid about all that our services are worth in the market, and we are rather better off than Christ's fellow-craftsmen, the carpenters, and Peter's brethren, the fishermen. The country minister is often straitened, but so, also, is the country doctor; but nobody ever gives the doctor a medical discount of ten per cent. Why should we, of all men, be genteel paupers? Why should the merchant-tailor give me one-tenth of the value of a suit of black tricot, because I am a parson? If a parson is very poor, and one wants to help him as a poor man, let him do so; but let no man represent the profession as so anxious for clerical discounts that it will jump at a thin device, by which a suit of clothes that can never be sold to anybody but a clergyman, is marked up to twenty-two dollars, in order to be knocked down to nineteen dollars and eighty cents.

The inside of this document contains directions for the self-measurement of the reverend clergy, by which the height, weight, and cubical contents of each learned divine can be accurately ascertained. These directions are accompanied by two cuts, the first giving a rear view of a clergyman, the other a correct front view, with whiskers. The cuts are crossed by lines and diagrams that remind one of the anatomical oxen in cook-books, intended to show the beef-buyer where the porterhouse steak is situate, and from what part the shoulder-blade roast may be cut. Along with these cuts are full and explicit directions for the measurement of a

clergyman around the chest, around the waist, and so on down.

You think that I am laughing at the clergy. I did not get up this sartorian view, behind and before, of the parson. The man who most sincerely reverences that vocation, which is certainly sacred if sacredly followed, will be the first to feel the absurdity of all this long coat-tail and broad phylactery business,—this doing up a parson in straight-breasted coat and cassock vest, as though his spiritual graces were too delicate for the rude winds of earth. It is not a hopeful sign of growing robustness that so many ministers, in all denominations, are inclined to put themselves into uniform, like spiritual policemen. It is not the veteran, but the holiday soldier, who prides himself on his brass buttons; and men set apart to the greatest and most difficult work in the world—the moral and spiritual elevation of their fellows—ought to be above baubles.

Dress is a trifle, to be sure, and the largest liberty should be accorded to individual taste in the matter. If a man likes to part his hair differently from other people, it is only a narrow bigot that will remark on it. And if a minister wishes a clerical suit, as a matter of individual taste, it would be impertinence to object. Some of the ablest and best clergymen in the country wear a distinctive dress, and it is not for one unworthy to unloose their shoe-latchets to find fault. But against the clerical suit as a symptom one may protest. The younger clergymen of all religious bodies ought to feel the breath of the future upon them,—ought to know that class privilege is done away. Every assumption of separatism or authority reacts. He is the best minister who is most a man, and no manly man ever plumes himself on his office, be he constable or parson.

There are yet lingering on this busy scene men who think that they in some sort represent the Most High to the imaginations of men, and who resort to small stage effects to give loftiness to their ambassadorial dignity. I remember to have heard somewhere of one such minister, upon whose corrugated brow sat all the terrors of the law, and in whose ghostly and sepulchral voice the imagination might hear the gathering thunders of Sinai. He called at the house of a lady whose little child, playing on the floor, was so awe-stricken that he crept into a corner, got down behind a chair, and gazed up between the rungs at the holy man. At length, after various godly admonitions, the solemn man said good-bye, and the little

fellow crept out on the floor, and, looking up at his mother, asked in a reverent whisper:

"Mamma, was dat God?"

Before I get too far away from the tailors and their clerical suits, I must recall the grim joke of that Sioux Indian, who, in the awful slaughter of the Minnesota Massacre, eagerly donned the "clerical suit" of an Episcopal missionary, whose house he had plundered. Meeting a poor white woman fleeing for her life, he did not tomahawk her as she expected, but drawing himself up with droll mock-earnestness, he inquired:

"Do you belong to my church?"

It is not in the coat so much as in the man, that the assumption of a spiritual superiority lies. Some men put their stateliness into their sermons, and there are fopperies of discourse as well as of clothes. "I would as soon wear a fine coat as preach a fine sermon," said the stern and logical John Wesley. But there may be as much Phariseism in plainness as in fineness. Simplicity is something to be neither weighed nor measured. If a man will be just a man he will hit it. "As I grow older I become more a man and less a minister," said Channing, and Dr. James Alexander writes under this sentence: "Development in the right direction."

One of the most pompous and empty declaimers that I ever knew in the pulpit was a Western lay-preacher, who, having once in his life a chance to air his eloquence before a town audience in the capital of Minnesota, was enlarging on the uncertainty of life's advantages. With a stately but impassioned gesticulation, he reached his climax with this outburst: "He knows not how soon may death invade the sweet instinctive circle of his family peculiarities!"

This reminds me of what was said by a Methodist presiding elder of the old time, from one of the mountain districts of Pennsylvania, about the preaching of a young brother whom he was praising before the conference. "Bishop," he said, "I have heard a ray of eloquence dart from him with a degree of torrents."

This kind of blundering is something very different from the Oriental *abandon* with which the famous sailor-preacher, Father Taylor, used to delight his hearers—both the sailors and the lettered Bostonians who were wont to throng his chapel. Mr. Emerson related in his lecture on "Eloquence" how without let or hindrance the old man's fancy ran riot in strange imagery. On the occasion of his departure for Europe, he asked

pathetically: "Who will feed my lambs while I am gone?" Then looking round he cried: "The great God that takes care of the whale, giving him a cart-load of herrings for breakfast, He will feed my lambs."

I think it is Father Taylor of whom it is told, that in one of his most passionate bursts of oratory he had added one gorgeous digression to another, until he was unable to find again the original current of his sentence. He paused a moment in embarrassment and then came out with: "Hallelujah, brethren! my verb has lost sight of its nominative, but I am bound for the kingdom of heaven!"

Mr. Emerson compares Taylor with Kossuth in this gift of natural and unchecked oratory. I remember an incident that happened during the great Hungarian's progress through this country. In Madison, Indiana, he spoke in the church of which my step-father was the pastor. After his address in English the Americans were all turned out to make room for the Germans, but I climbed, boy-like, from the parsonage yard through the church window and got a place on the steps of the high, old-fashioned pulpit, where, hanging over the balusters, I saw, rather than understood, the wonderful oratory of Kossuth. The Germans were wrought into a frenzy of excitement, but just as the speaker, depicting the coming liberty of Germany, had reached the summit of his tremendous declamation, and while the throng of Germans crowding every inch of floor and galleries was swayed to and fro in excitement as by a wind, a child held in the arms of a woman in the very middle of the church, took fright at the applause and began to scream so frantically as to render any further speaking impossible. It took some minutes to get the mother and child out of the jam; the break was depressing, and I felt very sure the speech was spoiled. As the child's voice at length went out into the open air, the disappointed and now depressed audience turned to the orator, who swept his hand through the air and said vehemently in German:

"He may cry now for Germany, but when he is old he will laugh!"

The lost ground was recovered by this single dash, and the audience was at white heat again.

I ought not to leave Father Taylor without putting down a characteristic saying which I have from one of his family. As his mind failed from age and brain soften-

ing, he now and then flashed out with his old brilliancy. A young lady relative found it necessary to tell Mrs. Taylor of something she had seen in the childish old man which needed checking. This exasperated him, and it happened the next morning that he and this relative were the only persons at the table. Father Taylor was angry and did not as usual say grace before meat. His niece sat waiting while the old gentleman sulkily stirred his coffee.

"Uncle Edward, do ask a blessing," she pleaded.

Without closing his eyes or ceasing for a moment to stir the coffee, he said:

"O Lord! save us from deceit, conceit, and tattling."

One of his daughters had this sentence illuminated after his death, and hung where it would always be in sight, a perpetual admonition and reminder.

It is the perfect genuineness of such a man as Father Taylor that makes him invaluable. He was made after no pattern, and a unique man is a perpetual antidote to cant.

The over-pious man is quite as bad as the over-rhetorical man. But no man is to be judged by his green flavor. Every school-boy's handwriting follows at a great distance perhaps, the copy: and every young man is either imitating older men, or trying to live up to some visionary theory. After a while, if he be a real man and not a plaster cast, he hears the oracle within and begins to live his own life. An energetic originality will redeem a man from cant. When Mr. Moody first began to go about Chicago asking people if they were Christians, he was called "Crazy Moody." After a while, when his native force began to show through, the papers called him "Brother Moody." But when the man was fully developed, they came down to the more respectful "Mr. Moody." For, though Mr. Moody is dogmatic and narrow, as most enthusiasts are, he is yet a true man, full of originality. His gradual emancipation from the cant of his early life shows this. And I am not sure that he has yet gone through his last transformation. There is certainly room for him to learn a little more liberality. In the old days, when he plied his stereotyped interrogatory, he went South in the service of the Christian Commission, I have heard him relate that an old planter came in to ask for rations. Mr. Moody, by way of doing good to his soul, asked "Are you a Christian?" But the planter was deaf and his interrogator

was soon shouting the question in his ear, but still ineffectually. Turning to the negro who had accompanied the old man, he inquired: "Is your master a Christian?" "No, sah, he's a Prisbyterian." Much disconcerted, Mr. Moody sought still to turn the conversation to profit, so, addressing the negro, he said: "Are you a Christian?" "Yes, sah, I'se a Mefodis."

The answer ought to suggest many things to a professional revivalist. Are we others not also, like the negro, a little foggy as to what constitutes a Christian? If it does not consist in being a member of a church, does it any more lie in mysterious emotions? Is it a state into which men can be inducted by the hundred, and instantaneously? Is it not just one of those slow-growing developments,—one of those subtle, intangible, uncountable things that evade inquisitions and statistics, and that are not to be dealt with too grossly? Either the Sermon on the Mount means something, or it does not.

But it is hardly my function, here, to preach much, but to tell stories. And Mr. Moody's negro reminds us of another negro. General Fiske is a prominent Methodist, and while in charge of the Freedmen's Bureau operations at the West, addressed a company of negroes on the subject of religion. At the close a negro preacher saluted him and said:

"Gin'l, dat wus a mighty good speech, sah,—a mighty good speech, sho's yo' bawn, gin'l. You's a Baptis', gin'l. Couldn' no man make dat speech 'thout he'd been under the watah. Dat's sho. Dey's a mighty sight o' dese heah Mefodis 'bout heah, gin'l; but dey's a low set, a mighty low set."

I bought a little book at auction for a few cents the other day, not because I wanted it, but because I wanted one book of the lot in which it was sold. This little book is entitled "Letters of the late Lord Littellton," and I looked in vain for any Lord Littellton in literature or the peerage. It was not until I had gone on this foolish scent for some time that I discovered—what I ought to have known before if I had been as infallible as those writers who know everything without the pains of learning anything—that Lord Littellton is a myth invented by William Coombe, the author of "Dr. Syntax's Tour." In this book there figures one of those *bons vivants* parsons, that are not so common now as they were, happily—or at least not so barefaced. He has lost his sermon, of which he says: "It was divided

into three parts; the first was taken from Clarke, the second from Abernethy, and the third was composed by myself; and the two practical observations were translated from a Latin sermon, preached and printed at Oxford in the year of our Lord, 1735. * * * It had four beginnings, and seven conclusions; by the help whereof I preached it, with equal success, on a Christmas-day, for the benefit of a charity, at a florists' feast, an assize, an archdeacon's visitation, and a funeral, besides common occasions."

I am quite unwilling to believe, despite the popularity of homiletical publications, that sermon-stealing is common. If it were, the standard of pulpit eloquence might be higher. I have heard that a very prominent and fashionable preacher, not far from New York, on being detected in the delivery of some of Frederick W. Robertson's choicest discourses, excused himself by saying that he knew Robertson's sermons to be better than any he could prepare on the same subjects. In this he may have been right. But if he had been strictly honest he would have made some such statement to the congregation before the sermons were given. And I cannot see why it would not be well for a minister, let us say of limited leisure and deficient originality, to give his people from time to time the best passages out of the great preachers, frankly giving credit. Let him not trust to his hearers' ignorance to palm off on them other people's gold for his own, lest he be like the minister in the stock story, one of whose hearers in the middle of a fine passage said audibly, "That's South." When the subject changed a little the same man was heard to mutter "Watson," and at the next turning, "That's Chalmers," at which the exasperated minister cried out,

"Put that man out."

"That's himself," said the imperturbable adversary.

Everybody knows something of that sermon by President Nott, on dueling, which is so hackneyed from the continual declamation by schoolboys of the passage beginning: "Hamilton yielded to the force of an imperious custom." But the barefaced sermon-thieves did not let even this alone, and Professor John Nott told me that he had himself listened to the preaching by a plagiarist of his father's celebrated sermon.

I once found in a pulpit Bible a preacher's notes which were but catch-words for the delivery from memory of Headley's highly colored discourse about Mount Tabor. And

I know a preacher in the hill-country who delivered sermon after sermon, drawn substantially from Hunter's "Sacred Biography." It is a pity that a man who is a good declaimer but not of any force in the composition of a sermon should not have the privilege of delivering anything he can find, provided always that he does not omit marks of quotation. Nothing can be worse for congregations than the obligation to originality on the part of the preacher who cannot originate. Rather, there is one thing worse than a dull minister, and that is a dishonest one, and such are all sermon-stealers—asses braying in lions' skins.

A young Methodist preacher was once arraigned in Illinois for plagiarism of Bishop Morris's sermons. It happened that Morris was presiding over the conference at the time, and the leading men in the body were quite disposed to make an example of the young thief.

"Don't be too hard," pleaded Bishop Morris. "You must admit, at least, that the young man showed a good deal of judgment in his selections."

Bishop Morris was a well-nourished man with a keen hatred of cant. He had the bad habit of chewing tobacco, and a melancholy brother once rebuked him in set and solemn phrases for his indulgence in this vice. "Brother," he answered, in a pious tone, "did you never read what the apostle says, that one man eats meat, while another being weak eateth herbs? I," continued the portly bishop with solemnity, "am one of the weak brethren."

The man with a pedantic hobby is the worst. I knew on the frontier a Baptist minister, who drew a good round salary from the Home Missionary funds of his denomination, and whom I heard deliver the third of a series of discourses on "The Cainite Rebellion." There were others yet to come on the same subject, which was but one branch of a grand series on Divine Providence. He told me that he had spent fourteen years in studying metaphysics, and seven years in his studies of Divine Providence. He said he "had exhausted Providence." If I had been Providence I should have been exhausted long before. He soon exhausted even the Home Missionary authorities, his salary was cut off, and he went to making brooms, in which function he rendered the world better service than in elucidating the history of the land of Nod.

In the effort to avoid a clerical exclusiveness some ministers rush into an undignified

familiarity. A rude woman in Iowa said enthusiastically that she did like her pastor:—"Why he come right into my kitchen the other day, and sot right down by the stove, and took up the tongs and began to snap them,—*so common like.*" I once took charge of a church in a lumbering village, succeeding a minister who had made himself agreeable by entering the back doors of the houses of his parishioners, and that without knocking, and by many other familiarities which had brought him great popularity with the lumbermen and their families. He reaped a substantial harvest from his familiarity in many ways, never hesitating to make his wants known, and generally carrying a basket on his arm. Nothing so won upon his admirers as his habit of asking for a bit of bread and butter when he was hungry. I found myself regarded as the pink of exclusiveness because I knocked at the door and went in by the front of a house, and took my free-and-easy luncheons at home. One evening, while I was engaged in conversation in a store, the remarks of the company in praise of my predecessor became very pointed; they were evidently intended for my edification. I answered mildly that I should not think of taking liberties in other men's houses which I should be unwilling to have them take in mine. A strapping lumberman, six feet two, in picturesque red shirt, approached me, and, squaring himself off, delivered his fire point-blank.

"Looky here, Mister, ef you've brought any airs to this yere town, the sooner you git rid of them the better."

What could I say? But any man can prove by a year's trial that, even with such people, the better way is for the minister to respect himself, and to teach other men to respect themselves. A man of true instincts will readily see the difference between a manly friendliness and a disgusting familiarity, or a fawning servility.

I have told in the pages of this magazine of one army chaplain, and now comes, while I write, a little note from a stranger to tell me that my old friend Chaplain Green is dead. He was a Baptist minister in the lumbering village of which I have spoken,—a village that has since grown to be a considerable city. He was a man of slender culture, so far as book-knowledge went. He had been a steamboat captain, a sheriff, and I know not what besides. There was a world of wholesome uprightness and downrightness in him. When the war broke out, he was

quite active in promoting enlistments. But the country regions were slow to move in those first weeks. He was holding a war-meeting in Cottage Grove, in Minnesota, and when he had concluded a fiery speech he called on a young lawyer to address the people. The fellow was one of those egotists who think of nothing but their own vanity. He threw cold water on all enthusiasm by a pompous speech of a Fourth-of-July sort. Forgetting the awful crisis, he said, with great flourishes:

"If ever my country needs my service, I am ready to go. Whenever the time comes that I am wanted, I shall be ready."

At this, Mr. Green jumped to his feet and shouted:

"For God's sake, sir, if the time hasn't come now, when will it come?"

Such questions are bad for oratory.

Mr. Green became chaplain of one of the Wisconsin regiments, and was beloved of all his men. While the regiment was at the rendezvous at Madison, Wisconsin, he was one day called on to bury one of his "boys." He had concluded the prayers at the grave and was marching back decorously at the head of the escort, when a man rode up in front of the grave-yard gate, and cried out, as the procession came out, "Chuck 'em in, d—n 'em!" with much more abuse of the soldiers, not fit to be repeated. Quicker than a flash the impulsive chaplain stooped to pick up a hard frozen clod, and the next moment the insulter of dead soldiers was felled from his horse. But the flash was momentary; once back in his quarters, the chaplain was terrified at the thought of his dreadful breach of military and clerical decorum. He sat in despair for two hours, then he sallied forth to the colonel's quarters.

"Colonel," he said, "what do you think they'll do with me?"

"I don't know," said the colonel sternly. "I know what they ought to do with you, though."

"What?" asked the penitent chaplain.

"Promote you."

The ministers who were able to be fellows with men were the successful chaplains. There is a refined minister, remarkable for elegant rhetoric and well known in the Presbyterian body, who, in a moment of enthusiasm, accepted a chaplain's commission. Never was a man less suited to the place. When at last he had extricated himself by resignation, he expressed his feelings by a characteristic figure of speech. "I would just as soon spend the remainder of my days on a

hammock in the corner of an Irish grocery as in the army."

A major in the paymaster's department told me of the chaplain of a regiment from the mountains of Kentucky, in which there were six hundred men who could not read. The chaplain was not remarkable for erudition, but he suited himself to his hearers. This is the way he served up the story of Daniel:

"Now, my brethren, there was Dan'el. He was one of them that surrendered when Jerusalem was captured. Now, this 'ere Dan'el, he tuck the oath of allegiance to the king of Persia, and the king of Persia made him a colonel in the Persian army. That made all the West P'inters mad. They determined to git him cashiered. They couldn't find nothin' ag'in Dan'el, only that he was a prayin' man. So they went and got the king to issue an order that they shouldn't nobody pray for thirty days.

"Well, when that order was read on dress-parade, Dan'el was mad as fury. He went straight back to his tent and turned up the fly, and knelt down and prayed longer and louder nor ever. Then they went and told the king of Persia, and the king of Persia throwed him into the guard-house and let him stay all night.

"Well, now, the king of Persia couldn't sleep, because he knowed Dan'el was the best colonel in the army. So in the mornin' the king went down to the guard-house and give Dan'el a good talkin' to, and let him out. But Dan'el, he wouldn't go out. He demanded a court of inquiry. Well, when the court of inquiry met, Dan'el beat 'em all to pieces. He proved that the ginerall order was contrary to the articles of war. Then the king of Persia made Dan'el a brigadier-general."

It is the longest possible step from this chaplain to Doctor Bethune, who was a typical "rich man's preacher." It is told in Brooklyn that Doctor Bethune once related seriously to some friends that he found himself obliged to go from one part of the city to another one day, when he had not his carriage with him. He did not know what to do, until he luckily happened to think of "those moving machines that go through the streets," as he called them. He got into one, and was surprised to find what nice things the street-cars were for poor people.

But Doctor Bethune, even, rebelled against conventional propriety in driving fast horses in a day when a horse with good legs was far more reprobate than he is to-day. It is said that Bethune's consistory once com-

plained of the scandal caused by the doctor's horses.

"Well, gentlemen," he said meekly, "I may as well tell you that I mean to sell those horses."

The brethren expressed their delight.

"The reason I am going to sell them is this," he added slyly. "I was driving to-day, and So-and-so passed me, and I tell you, gentlemen, I will not drive a team that can be passed."

In my previous article I did injustice to Doctor Taylor, whose admirable book, "The Ministry of the Word," I represented as teaching that a minister should always read his sermons. Doctor Taylor holds only that the sermon should be written; not that it should always be read. On all such points it is hard to make a general rule. I would as soon trust Doctor Taylor's judgment as any one's; but, if I remember rightly, Doctor James Alexander, another excellent authority, insists that an extemporaneous speaker ought not to write a sermon before delivery. But in this whole matter of writing and reading sermons, the rule is to follow the natural bent. At least, those who, like myself, have never written a sermon in their lives, will not be troubled with remorse for having printed sermons. There are few discourses that deserve to be printed in full. An old and stupid clergyman in England, the son or grandson of a celebrated man, told me that he had printed more than a thousand of his own sermons for gratuitous distribution. The old man thought this a miracle of zeal; but I am sure that his sharp young curate, who stood by him while he talked, knew that it was a miracle of vanity.

It seems a pity that some of the *esprit du corps* that is wasted among ministers in trying to arrest the freedom of individual thought might not be turned to other account. Suppose that, instead of arraigning for heresy our Lyman Beechers, Albert Barneses, Horace Bushnells, and the later martyrs, we should set to work to rid the ranks of our profession of a few humbugs, clap-trap sensationalists, coxcombs, sanctimonists, self-seekers, parsons who never pay grocers' bills, those who write puffs of themselves, and those who carry uncharitableness up to the credit side of the ledger, under the head of zeal. What if, while we are so eager to root out the good wheat of individuality and courageous utterance, we leave untouched the tares of cowardice and selfishness? The business of tare-pulling is one which Christ would not intrust to the discrimination of

the angels themselves, and some of those who are engaged in it to-day are not just like angels—at least, not like the better class of angels.

There is so much to be done that it is a pity to waste any enthusiasm. In Jotham's parable, the olive refused to leave its fatness to be king over the trees, and one regrets to see men so useful as Doctor Tyng, the younger, reversing the parable by following in a wake marked with the wrecks of such preachers as Irving and Cumming. For if Christ were to come, what then? There is no more assurance that the New Testament imagery will find literal fulfillment than did that of the Old. And if he were to come now as he did before, let us say in the overalls of a workingman, repudiating our social pride and our pride of orthodoxy, exposing our hypocrisies, great and small; consorting with the poor, the wicked, and the outcast; making friends of publicans, eating with sinners, and commending philanthropic heretics like the good Samaritan,—if he were to come as he came once, do you think we should know him? It would seem that the chief-priests and scribes expected him before, but did not recognize him. And what if he should not know us, who are called by his name? Is there not need that some Elias should first come?

Some years ago a minister in New York City made a great sensation by advertising a sermon to thieves and harlots. The house was crowded, of course, with people who

wanted to get a good look at the wicked people who, for their part, did not come. This kind of prurient interest is easily excited by any discussion of social evils that is trumpeted. It is only the minister of firm but delicate touch who can advantageously treat such topics at all, and he will not use them as baits to catch gudgeons with. Such themes are sure to excite curiosity, whether they be treated in the pulpit, or the daily papers, or the weekly dreadfuls; but the chief purpose of the moral reformer should not be to excite evil curiosity. A certain kind of pathological information a reformer needs; but it is not information to be generally disseminated. About all such evil a pure spirit will say, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret!"

It is not by hiding the weaknesses of ministers that we elevate the profession. Nor by finding fault, perhaps, though that is the healthier way of the two. But a minister ought to be something better than an ornament to solemn occasions, like the tassels on a hearse. Let the younger men, who feel the liberalizing influence of the age, the breath of the twentieth century on their brows, seek also that simple earnestness and consecration to Christ-like service of their fellows, that only can make a minister's life worth the living. For, indeed, it is the most glorious life in God's world, if gloriously lived out. But effeminacy and self-seeking turn the noblest vocation into a sham.

"WE MET UPON THE CROWDED WAY."

I.

WE met upon the crowded way;
 We spoke and passed. How bright the day
 Turned from that moment, for a light
 Did shine from her to make it bright.
 And then I asked can such as she
 From life be blotted utterly?
 The thoughts from those clear eyes that dawn—
 Can they unto the ground be drawn?

II.

Among the mighty who can find
 One who hath a perfect mind?
 Angry, jealous, cursed by feuds,—
 They own the sway of many moods.
 But thou dost perfect seem to me
 In thy divine simplicity.
 Though from the heavens the stars be wrenched
 Thy light, dear maid, shall not be quenched:
 Gentle, and true, and pure, and free—
 The gods will not abandon thee!