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- ART. I.—1. *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Special Report of the Prudential Committee, on the control to be exercised over Missionaries and Mission Churches.* Printed for the use of the Board at the Annual Meeting.* Revised edition. Press of T. R. Marvin.
2. *Correspondence between the Cherokee and Choctaw Missions, the Rev. S. B. Treat, and the Prudential Committee.* Missionary Herald, October, 1848.

IT is a matter of notoriety that the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, have for several years been sorely harassed on account of their supposed patronage or tolerance of slavery. Those known to the country as abolitionists, have felt it to be a duty to expostulate with the Board from time to time, for receiving money from the owners of slaves, for employing slaveholding missionaries, and for sustaining mission churches in which slaveholders were received as members.

* Also published in the Missionary Herald for October, 1848.

ART. IV.—*The Free Church Pulpit*, consisting of Discourses by the most eminent Divines of the Free Church of Scotland in three volumes. Robert Carter, 58 Canal Street. 1848.

THE power of true religion in influencing the minds of men has seldom, if ever, been more manifest than in that great multitude of people who relinquish all the comforts and advantages of the established church of Scotland, rather than submit to an authority attempted to be exercised by the civil government over the spiritual concerns of the church. This sacrifice, it is true, was principally made by the pastors of the churches, who were living in comfortable manses, and whose support was received from the funds of the established church; but in regard to the people, they subjected themselves to the burden of sustaining their ministers, and providing houses of worship, and manses for the comfortable accommodation of their pastors. Indeed, though the sacrifice at first was heaviest on the ministers and schoolmasters; yet eventually, the burden fell almost entirely on the people; for by their liberality, ministers and schoolmasters were made as comfortable as before the disruption. We are at a loss, whether most to admire the zeal and resolution which influenced such a multitude to relinquish their connection with the established church or their unanimity and liberality and energy, in carrying through their various *schemes* for the support and enlargement of the Free Church. During the last half century, there must have been a great revival of vital godliness in this portion of the Scottish church. This growth was gradual and silent, but real and extensive. There was, during this period, a return to the good old ways; which for a while had been partially forsaken by the most. Considering the evidence of the power of religion exhibited by the ministers, elders, and members of the Free Church, in this extraordinary event, we naturally feel a curiosity to know what was the character of the sermons preached by those pastors who took the lead in this remarkable exodus. With some of the leaders in this transaction, the Christian public had had the opportunity of knowing something; but in regard to much the greater number, we, in this country, enjoyed no opportunity of any acquaintance with them. It was, therefore, a matter of

real gratification to the American churches, when the Free Church thought proper to send a deputation of some of their best preachers, to solicit aid in accomplishing the great work which they had undertaken. And the impression made by the sermons delivered in our churches, by these distinguished men, was altogether favourable. The impression, indeed, was made on some minds, that, from these specimens, the preaching of the Scottish ministers, at least of the Free Church of Scotland, was superior to that of the preachers of any denomination, in this country. As a class, perhaps it may be true, that the pulpit of the Free Church is superior to that of any other body of Christians in the world. But we cannot form a correct general conclusion, on this point, from the sermons of a few persons. The deputies to this country from the Free Church of Scotland, were selected from their most distinguished men. And again, these men preached, no doubt, their very best sermons. A false inference is often drawn from a single sermon, prepared with great care, and delivered in favourable circumstances, of the usual discourses of the man. The sermons of no preacher are uniformly great; nor is the same sermon, preached on different occasions, equally popular and impressive. And some discourses which were almost universally admired, as delivered from the pulpit, when published are found to possess no extraordinary merit.

After hearing the brethren from Scotland, there arose, naturally, a curiosity to know how far their discourses might be considered a fair specimen of the Free Scottish pulpit. Beyond expectation, the opportunity is now afforded of fully gratifying this curiosity. In the volumes now under review, we have sermons from more than a hundred of those ministers who went out of the established church and formed the Free Church of Scotland. We have also a number of sermons, by ministers who have since joined the Free Church, or have been ordained by its presbyteries; whose sermons, in our judgment, are not inferior to those of their older brethren. The whole number of discourses is one hundred and sixty. In examining these discourses, we have been gratified to find, that almost universally they are truly evangelical and practical, and so perspicuous in style, that they are well adapted to the common reader.

Our next remark is, that in very few of them is there any

display of extraordinary talent, or marked originality. They appear to us to be generally free from that ambition of fine writing, into which some preachers in this country are apt to fall. These sermons appear to have been composed, not for publication, originally, but for the instruction and edification of common Christians. In general, they are more particularly addressed to the pious, than to the impenitent; and, in our judgment, they will be perused with pleasure and profit by serious people. It is difficult, however, to give a general character of compositions from the pens of considerably more than a hundred preachers; except as to their spiritual and evangelical character. Every preacher has something peculiar to himself, by which he is distinguished from all others. We must say, however, that few of these sermons, if brought to the test of the rules of criticism, would be judged to be complete. There is commonly a manifest defect in the exordium or introduction. In some of the sermons, there is nothing of the kind, but an abrupt commencement of the discussion of the subject. And where there is an exordium, it seems generally to have been composed with little care. We are aware, that there is an error on the other extreme. The introduction to some sermons is too elaborate, too figurative, too pathetic, or too splendid. Though it may excite admiration, yet it injures the effect of the more solid parts of the discourse. The expectation of the hearers is raised too high; and when these expectations are not realized in the sequel of the discourse, dissatisfaction if not disgust is apt to be produced. Such exordiums have been well compared to a very splendid vestibule to a plain building. As an example of such introductions, we would mention Saurin's sermons. Sometimes, indeed, this elegant preacher keeps up and continues the elevated feelings, excited by his exordium, through the whole discourse. But often this is not the case: and after a splendid proem, you have a dry doctrinal discussion; or if not dry, yet matter addressed entirely to the understanding. One of the very best preachers we ever had the opportunity of hearing, frequently had this fault; his exordium was always composed with care, and every word of it written; while, for the remainder of his sermon, he had only brief notes of the heads and principal ideas. A very deserving minister of another denomination, after hearing him several times, said, that when he listened to

his highly wrought and rhetorical introductions, he was charmed beyond expression; but when he came to the doctrinal discussions arising out of the text, there was a sensible falling off; and though well pleased in the main, the expectations excited in the beginning were painfully disappointed.

There may be occasions, indeed, in which no introduction is needed; and others, in which it may be proper to have an elaborate exordium, arising from the peculiar circumstances, or prejudices of the audience. But it should be remembered, that the main design of an exordium should be, to prepare the hearers for the body of the discourse. It should be simple and remarkably perspicuous, and at the same time interesting in a gentle degree; so that the sluggish minds of the hearers, should not, at the first, be taxed with an effort to understand what is said; and it should not be mere common-place, expressed in common phrases; but while what is said should command assent as soon as proposed, and should be sufficiently interesting to the feelings to command attention, it should not be adapted to make a strong impression, or to call forth lively admiration.

Another thing essential in a good exordium is, that while it avoids the anticipation of the matters to be discussed in the main subject of the discourse, it should have such a relation to it as to prepare the minds of the audience for the favourable reception of the main argument. Often the best introduction may be derived from the context; and at other times from some related truth not intended to be discussed. And where it is known, that strong prejudices are entertained by the hearers, it will be best not to attack them at once, but to obviate them indirectly, by a series of remarks which may serve as a foundation for their subversion. It is sometimes the case, that a preacher, when he appears before an audience, has suggested to him, by the very appearance of things, what is the suitable matter with which to make his first address to them. And though he may intend to read his sermon, this need not prevent him from availing himself of such suggestions as may be pertinent and seasonable. Every speaker must know, that much depends upon getting the thoughts and feelings of the audience at the commencement, in unison with his own and with the subject. When the confidence of the hearers is conciliated they can be led along with much ease. This however shows, that

not only is it important to have a good introduction, but that the preacher's mind be in a right state. Without right feelings in the speaker, it is vain to expect them in the audience.

The old Scotch method of sermonizing was, to make formal divisions, and then to abound in subdivisions; and to conclude with numerous uses, inferences, or practical reflexions. The sermons of the two Erskines may be taken as an excellent model of this method of distributing the several parts of a discourse. They were also fond of preaching many sermons from a single text; so that sometimes they would contrive to include a whole body of divinity in a series of discourses on one text. The excellent Mr. Derham, we recollect, has a whole volume of discourses on a single chapter. But the present race of Scotch preachers have entirely departed from the old method: they have, perhaps, verged too closely on the opposite extreme. Until we examined these volumes of sermons, by ministers of the Free Church, we had supposed, that the old method of formal divisions and subdivisions was retained by plain evangelical preachers in the country. But here we have sermons from more than a hundred preachers of that church; and scarcely one of them is cast in the ancient mould. Perhaps, in one fourth of the whole, the subject is distributed into heads, and these announced at the beginning; but in these the divisions are few, never exceeding four general heads, and commonly confined to two. But in the majority of these sermons, there is no formal division announced; after a brief exordium, the preacher draws from the text some prominent truth, on which he makes his remarks, and then proceeds to another point; and thus, through the whole discourse. And in some of the sermons there are no divisions of any kind marked, but the whole is a continued discourse on some one point, from the beginning to the end. An inquiry naturally arises here, which of these methods of sermonizing is best? The proper answer is, that each has its advantages and disadvantages. The same method is not suited to every subject, nor to every age. Formerly, when books were scarce, it was considered very important that the method of sermonizing should be such as to favour the memory. It was very customary for pious people to meet, after hearing a sermon, and repeat the discourse to one another: and from Mr. Baxter we learn, that ministers were accustomed to re-

peat their own sermons at private meetings, after delivering them in public. It was also a custom, not yet entirely obsolete, for parents to require their children and domestics, to give on the Sabbath evenings, an account of the sermon which they had heard during the day. It is evident, that the old method of arranging the subjects under general heads, and subdivisions greatly facilitated the memorizing of them; and if that were an object of importance now, the old method should be retained, or rather restored. But now, when good sermons in print so much abound, it seems scarcely necessary to tax the memory with the retention of all the sermons which are heard. So far as this custom serves to fix the attention of the hearers, which might otherwise wander, it is good; but experience teaches, that the intense exercise of memory tends to prevent the proper exercise of the feelings and emotions, which the truth ought to produce; and the main object of preaching is to excite the affections and lead to the resolutions, which correspond with the nature of evangelical truth. The philosophy of this fact of experience is plain enough; but we need not at present enter into it. The same is true in regard to taking notes of sermons which we hear, or writing them down in short hand; the attention required in catching the words of the speaker prevents all proper feeling at the moment. But if we do not get the right impression of the truth while hearing a sermon, we are not likely to receive it from the perusal of notes of the discourse afterwards. In our opinion, therefore, the best method of hearing any discourse is to hear the word completely unoccupied with extraneous circumstances, and entirely free and open to receive the impression which the truths delivered are calculated to make.

Often, when a preacher announces to his hearers certain heads, on each of which he intends to treat, they are prone to run before him and try to anticipate what he will say under each. And if he dwells long on one, they become uneasy lest the sermon should be unreasonably and inconveniently long. And sometimes, when the heads of a discourse are heard, the intelligent hearer is in possession of the whole; for the discussion turns out to be a mere expansion of the idea contained in the original proposition. This is the circumstance that renders some sermons, which are carefully composed and judiciously arranged as to method, uninteresting. The preacher

makes no allowance for the hearer's ability to think and infer; but explains too much, and spends time in explaining what is already perfectly understood.

Robert Hall, in an ordination sermon, has some very judicious remarks on the subject of announcing formally what the preacher intends to accomplish. Speakers in the senate and at the bar seldom pursue this method. Yet this method, though not usually necessary, is sometimes very proper; as when two or more distinct propositions are intended to be discussed, it is convenient to have this distinctly understood at the beginning. And sometimes, when a text furnishes several distinct heads, the preacher may find it expedient not to handle every one, but it may suit his purpose to take up only a part, or perhaps only one point, and direct his whole attention to that; in which case, it is proper to exhibit in a general division, all the truths contained in the text; and then to inform his audience, that it is not his intention to dwell upon the whole, but only a part.

When divisions are formally made, it is important that they should be few in number; should be evidently contained in the text; and should not interfere with one another. Truths taken for granted or implied in a text, should be taken for granted by the preacher; or briefly exhibited by way of introduction. If the preacher wishes to dwell on such points, let him select an appropriate text, in which these matters are evidently introduced. Writers on rhetoric have insisted much on the importance of *unity* in public discourses; one rule of division, therefore is, not to make such a distribution of a subject as to require the discussion of things entirely diverse. This is a principle of common sense. When men speak they should aim at some definite object, to make some particular impression, or to persuade to some particular course of conduct. But the observance of this rule ought not to prevent the preacher from introducing any truths which he may judge useful and necessary to his people. Indeed the rule is less applicable to didactic discourses than is commonly supposed. Here the object is to communicate instruction, and though too much ought not to be attempted at once, yet, surely, no teacher ought to confine himself to a single point, when his hearers may stand in absolute need of knowing many other matters. He must not keep back truths which they must know or perish, or he will be responsible for the loss of

their souls. The great rule of the gospel preacher is, to bring forth to the people, whenever he addresses them, all the truths which he thinks will be most conducive to their edification and salvation; and if this ever comes in collision with the artificial rules of the teachers of eloquence, he must disregard them, as Paul did.

Enough has been said on the subject of method in sermonizing; it is more important to remark, that while the sermons, under consideration are not composed in accordance with the old model, as to method and formal divisions, they do conform in spirit and substance to the sermons of the best Scottish preachers, in the best time of the history of the Church of Scotland. These sermons possess very different degrees of merit; but it may be said of them, in general, that while they are strictly orthodox in doctrine, according to the Westminster Confession, they are spiritual and practical, and recognise constantly, the reality and necessity of the work of grace on the heart; and many of them describe accurately the exercises of the renewed heart, and exhibit clearly the privileges and consolations which are the heritage of true believers. We have been much gratified to observe that the views of these preachers, both as it relates to the doctrines of the gospel, and the interior life of the genuine Christian, his aspirations, imperfections, conflicts, temptations, and prevailing desires and purposes, do, in all respects, agree with the opinions and sentiments of the Presbyterian Church in America. The aim of the writers appears, evidently, to have been, to do good. There is no display—no straining after originality—no highly wrought pictures of the imagination—no undue refinement adapted to a fastidious taste—no affectation of classical learning—no strokes of satirical wit, and little or no controversy. You would scarcely know from these discourses, that any theological errors existed; or, that the whole world were not of the same mind in religion. There is not any where, that we have observed, any allusion to the “new divinity,” which has found its way into some sections of the Scottish Church; but we may infer from these sermons, that these new notions have not, to any considerable degree, agitated the great body of the Free Church congregations; or among so many sermons, there would have been some allusion to the fact.

We know that these new opinions, imported from America, have occasioned considerable excitement and agitation in what was until lately the United Secession Church. And we have read an account of a formal trial of a distinguished professor of theology, for holding or favouring the "new divinity." The only discourses in the number which manifest any thing of a controversial spirit, are one or two, which are directed against the Roman hierarchy.

As these sermons appear not to have been composed with a view to publication, but were originally intended for the edification of plain Christians, they contain scarcely any abstruse discussion on the different points of the Calvinistic system; but these doctrines are every where assumed as true, and a practical use made of them.

One thing rather surprised us, namely, that among so many discourses, so few are adapted to the conviction of impenitent sinners. And there is less notice taken of mere formalists and false professors than might have been expected, in so great a number of discourses. That must be a happy state of the church in which there is no occasion to warn the people against infidelity and error. It is admitted by all teachers of homiletics, that the conclusion of a sermon is commonly its most important part, as it is intended to fix on the mind and the heart the convictions and impressions which the discourse is intended to produce. Too often, however, even when the body of the discourse is well arranged and carefully composed, the peroration is left to take care of itself. The consequence is, that the preacher who pursues this course, is apt to fall into a tiresome repetition of what has before been said; or he sallies forth in a strain of exhortation, which often has no coherence with the preceding discourse, and is apt to degenerate into mere rant. The preacher, dissatisfied perhaps that he has succeeded so poorly in gaining the attention of his hearers, or making any sensible impression on their feelings, in the body of his sermon, makes, at the close, a great effort, by vociferation and violence of gesticulation to accomplish his purpose; and though some weak minds may be affected by such means, the more intelligent and judicious will go away dissatisfied, and often disgusted. If indeed a preacher happen to be in a good state of feeling, at the close of the doctrinal discussion, he may make a

more effective peroration, than he could have composed in his study; but as such a frame of mind cannot be safely calculated on, it is best to compose the *improvement* or practical application of his discourse with care; and if he at the moment should be enabled to bring forth something more suitable, and more impressive, very well. Whether a conclusion by instructive inferences, or by pungent and direct exhortation, be most edifying, will depend on a variety of circumstances. In a regular series of sermons to the same audience, the former is commonly most for edification; but on particular occasions, or when the people are somewhat excited, the latter is best. The judicious preacher will not confine himself to any one method of commencing or closing his sermons; but will be guided by the subject, and the circumstances of the people. In drawing out inferences, some judgment is required. Some preachers have nothing in their application, but what was clearly taught in the sermon: but inferences while they naturally flow from the subject discussed, must not contain the same ideas. Some eminent preachers have made their statement of doctrine brief, and have made up the larger part of their discourses, by instructive inferences.

We have been much disappointed in finding so little pains and labour, in the application of the sermons under review. What is said is commonly very good and very appropriate, but commonly it is very brief; sometimes only a few sentences. We cannot but think that this is a greater defect than the want of an exordium. Many of these discourses are sound, spiritual, and evangelical; but they are defective in the conclusion; and yet the subjects treated commonly furnish abundant matter for instructive or impressive applications.

Thirty-four of these discourses are, in the Scottish style, called *lectures*; by which they mean expository discourses, on a considerable portion of scripture. This is an excellent method of preaching, and possesses many advantages over the method of preaching from an isolated text; as it naturally brings up a great variety of subjects, which could scarcely be introduced into a regular sermon. And it brings the people to a better acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, than the common method of preaching. The Scotch ministers ought to excel in this species of instruction; for we believe that it is a rule, at least a

custom, that of the two discourses delivered on the Sabbath, the one should be expository. We do not know why these discourses are termed *lectures*: in England and New England, any sermon preached out of the common routine is called a *lecture*; the Scotch meaning of the term is, however, well understood in our churches.

It was our purpose to have given an analysis of some of the ablest sermons in this collection; but it would seem invidious to select a few, where there are so many of real excellence. And it is unnecessary, since Mr. Carter, our enterprising religious bookseller, has published a handsome edition of these volumes, where they can be had at a moderate price. Instead, therefore, of furnishing our readers with the analysis at first intended, or with specimens of the sermons, we would recommend to them to obtain the work: it will be a rich treasure for any family. While the fondness for variety will be abundantly gratified by the different style and manner of discussing religious subjects, confidence may be felt, that in all of the sermons in the collection evangelical truth will be found, with such a practical tendency, as cannot but be both pleasing and edifying to the pious mind. We do therefore cordially recommend the whole work, as furnishing a rich addition to our stock of printed sermons.

But as some of our readers may wish to know the names of some of the authors, we will subjoin a list of the names of a few who are best known in this country, with the general subject of their discourses. The first sermon is from the pen of the Rev. James Sieveright, lately a moderator of the General Assembly. His subject is, "The Freedom of Gospel Worship from Social Circumstances and National Peculiarities, asserted." (Text, John iv. 24.)

The second sermon is from the Rev. Dr. James Brewster—"The Consolations and Sufferings of the Believer, and their effects on his Character." (1 Pet. v. 10.)

"Moses a Type of Christ." By the Rev. John Forbes, D. D., LL.D. (Deut. iii. 17, 18.)

"Lot's Flight from Sodom." By the late Rev. Robert Jeffrey. (Gen. xix. 15-17.) Note. This zealous and indefatigable man, who laboured so successfully for the interests of the Free Church, ordered this sermon to be sent to the publishers of the

Free Church Pulpit, only half an hour before his death. And among his last words, were "I feel my affection increasing for the GLORIOUS CAUSE, which is the cause of God.

"The love of the Father." By the Rev. Andrew A. Bonar. John vi. 36—40.

"The consolations of Christ adapted to the state and condition of his people." By the Rev. Robert S. Candlish, D.D.

"Duty of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem." Psalms cxxii. 6. By the Rev. Thomas Brown, D.D. (Preached at the opening of the General Assembly, May 16, 1844.)

"Reasons why men reject the righteousness of God." (Rom. x. 1—9.) By the Rev. James Hamilton of London.

"Religious Divisions." By the Rev. Andrew Grey, D.D. (Luke xii. 51.)

"Christ our High Priest." By the Rev. Horatius Bonar. (Exod. xxiii. 36—38.)

"On Goodness." (Acts xi. 24.) By the Rev. P. McFarlan, D.D.

"The Church and the World." (Dan. ii. 31—35.) By the Rev. Duncan McFarland, D.D.

"Isaiah's Vision of Christ's Glory." (Is. vi.) By the Rev. J. J. Bonar.

"The Excellency of Christian Knowledge." (Phil. iii. 8.) By the Rev. James Buchanan, D.D.

"The Necessity of testifying Repentance towards God, to the faithful preaching of the Gospel." (Acts xx. 21.) By the Rev. W. A. Thompson.

"Spiritual Death and Life." By the Rev. William Mackenzie. (Ephes. ii. 1.)

"The duty of Examining the signs of the Times." (Is. xv. 15.) By the Rev. Robert Buchanan, D.D.

"The character of Christ as the Shepherd of Israel." By the Rev. Robert Elder.

"The Nature of Prayer; the Answer of Prayer; and the Encouragement to Prayer." By the Rev. W. M. Hetherington, LL.D.

"The Blessedness of the Believer." By the late Rev. David Welch, D.D.

"The Intercession of Christ." By the late Rev. Henry Duncan, D.D.

"Jesus the only Saviour." By the Rev. James Begg, D.D.

“The soul sorrow of Jesus.” By the Rev. J. Macnaughten.

“Self-evidencing Power of the Gospel.” By the Rev. George Lewis.

“Christ’s Death Effectual for the Salvation of the Elect only.” By the Rev. Henry Moncreiff.

“Importunate Prayer,” by the Rev. Robert Smith.

“Regeneration.” By the late James Somerville, D.D.

“Conversion of Paul.” By the Rev. James Ferguson, of London.

The reference to these sermons is not so much on account of their superior excellency, as because of the authors of most of them we have some knowledge. We have not, indeed, attempted any comparison of the sermons in this collection : such a comparison could not easily be made ; for while one preacher excels in one respect, he is surpassed in some other respect by other preachers. Besides, comparisons of this kind, between the sermons of living preachers are often unjust, and always invidious. That sermon which is best to one, is not so to every body ; tastes differ, and peculiar circumstances give a suitableness and efficacy to truths presented in a particular manner, to some hearers or readers, when the same truths are not peculiarly adapted to the condition and feelings of others. Besides, the efficacy of preaching does not depend on the wisdom or eloquence of the preacher, but on the special blessing of God. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but it is God who giveth the increase. Sermons remarkably adapted to the gratification of a refined taste, are on that very account, not the best suited for edification ; for it is a principle in the philosophy of the mind, that two different objects cannot be accomplished at one and the same time ; if edification be our object, it must be our only one. In our opinion, excellence in preaching the gospel is the most important gift which any man can possess, and the attainment of it should call into requisition all the powers and exertions of the human mind.

To be a good preacher the man must possess, in the first place, a vigorous, well-balanced, and well-disciplined mind. He must possess a good degree of quickness of apprehension ; but especially, a sound, discriminating judgment ; a retentive memory, not so much of words as of ideas in their just connexion in a discourse. The power of logical reasoning is also ne-

cessary ; false or sophistical reasoning in the pulpit is disgraceful and injurious to the truth. Even truth itself must not be corroborated by illogical arguments. The mind must be trained to a just and fair method of investigation ; in which nothing is assumed as true, which is not self-evident, or capable of clear demonstration ; and in which facts are stated with perfect candor and honesty. The imagination is of great importance to the preacher. We mean a fertile imagination, chastened and regulated by a sound judgment and correct taste. But a lively susceptibility of emotion is absolutely necessary to an impressive speaker. If we would make others feel, we must feel ourselves. It is feeling alone which can communicate the proper tones to the human voice ; and when these are heard the very feeling which produced them is by a mysterious sympathy transferred into the minds of our hearers. Some speakers, indeed, possess far more melodious and expressive voices than others, but any voice which derives its tones from genuine feeling, however harsh, will be impressive. These natural tones may be artificially imitated ; but the difference between the reality and the artificial imitation, is like that between the substance and the shadow. It may be objected, that the actors, who represent fictitious scenes, are able by their imitations of the proper expression of the passions, to affect their audiences in a very sensible degree. This is true ; but all successful actors on the stage, produce the effect on their hearers, not by *imitating* the tones of feeling, but by exciting in themselves the feeling itself ; otherwise, they could never succeed in producing the impression which they make on the feelings of the audience.

We once had the opportunity of hearing a very celebrated orator defending a man who had shot through the breast a neighbor in open day. We were curious to ascertain whether his effective oratory was a mere affectation of feeling, or whether he really felt what he said. The very first sentences which he uttered, convinced us irresistibly that his feeling was real and strong, and that he so made the case of his client his own, as to enter into all the emotions of his heart.

Various and extensive knowledge is also requisite to excellence in preaching. Every kind of learning is valuable to the public teacher of religion. The preacher should be able to bring out of his treasure things new and old. Knowledge

enlarges the mind and divests it of the prejudices, which are so apt to be imbibed by those whose views are circumscribed. The natural and physical sciences are really a part of natural theology, by which we read the divine attributes as exhibited in the book of nature. Astronomy is a noble science and agrees well with the studies and pursuits of the preacher. Geography and geology too, as relating to the globe on which we live, should not be neglected; and as the facts revealed by the latter seem, at first view, to conflict with the chronology of the Bible; every preacher should be able to obviate any objections which may arise from this quarter. The structure of the human body, and constitution of the human mind should be well understood by one who undertakes to enlighten the minds of others. And as to moral science, its fundamental principles form the basis of theology. A comprehensive knowledge of history is absolutely necessary to him, who would form just notions of the true character of man, and of the dispensations of divine Providence. But all the talents, knowledge, and mental discipline mentioned above, are not sufficient to make a good preacher, without genuine and lively piety. Even Cicero, a heathen, required that an orator should be a good man. But Cicero knew nothing of the scripture doctrine of divine influence. Every preacher should not only be a converted man, but his heart should glow with zeal for the glory of his Master, and should be warm with tender compassion for his fellow creatures. The pulpit is often spoken of, as though it were merely a theatre on which talent, taste, and learning, might be displayed to the admiration of a multitude of hearers. But, woe to the preacher, who ascends the sacred desk with such views as these. A double damnation will certainly be his doom, for he will not only be responsible for his own soul, but for those of his hearers, who perish through his neglect. The pulpit is an awful ordeal of a man's true character. If pride and ambition be predominant, here it will in all probability be manifested. There is no spot on the face of the earth, where Satan spreads his wiles, and plays off his stratagems more successfully than in the pulpit. He endeavours first to puff up; or, failing in this, he endeavours to cast the preacher down into discouragement. It will be one sign of the approach of the latter day glory, when the gift of preaching shall be granted, in an eminent degree, to many ministers. When

men like Paul, like Augustine, like Luther, like Whitefield, shall not appear as single stars in the firmament of the church; but brilliant constellation after constellation, shall arise and shine on Zion. Then the pulpit will be completely redeemed from the contempt into which it has fallen in many places. Then will Zion arise and shine, for the glory of the Lord will have arisen upon her. Then it will be manifest that the glorious Personage, seen in vision by the apostle John, is actually walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and holding the stars in his right hand.

These are not fancied scenes, the time will come when many burning and shining lights shall arise; when preachers like Whitefield, without Whitefield's faults—shall fly like a flame of fire through the earth, publishing glad tidings to all people. Then it may be said with emphasis, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion THY GOD REIGNETH."

ART. V.—*Divine Providence: or the Three Cycles of Revelation, showing the parallelism of the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian dispensations. Being a new evidence of the Divine origin of Christianity.* By the Rev. George Croly, LL. D. London: James Duncan. 1834. pp. 627.

DOCTOR CROLY is well known to our readers as a gentleman of fine literary taste. He takes high rank as a writer both in poetry and prose; and has evinced his correct taste in a judicious selection of the British poets. In the department of history, he has written a life of George IV., with a memoir of his times; and in theology he has published among other works, a treatise of high character on the Apocalypse, and the work which we have placed at the head of this article. This volume is altogether unique in its character, and differs in its design and execution from any work that we remember to have seen. It is an elaborate treatise to prove the divine origin of Christianity, by showing a resemblance between the three dispensations—the Patri-