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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—“HOW MAY THE MINISTRY INCREASE ITS EFFICIENCY AND USEFULNESS?”

NO. VI.

BY LEONARD WOOLSEY BACON, D.D., SAVANNAH, GA.

THE series of articles which I am invited to conclude in the **HOMILETIC REVIEW** must have been looked for by many a minister of the gospel, when it was first announced, with anxious interest. The theme, “How may the Ministry Increase its Efficiency and Usefulness?” came straight to “our business and bosoms”; and it had happily been assigned to five notably effective and useful men—two of them pastors, an elder and a younger, and three of them experienced in training pastors for their work. If now any should question my title to a place at the triclinium in such company, I could only plead the invitation of our host, and the fitness of allowing one who is very painfully conscious of his ineffectiveness, to sum up the instruction and help that he has gained from these diverse sources.

The main suggestions that have been enforced upon us are: The need of a deeper personal conviction of the main truths of the gospel; a thorough honesty, loyalty and courage in declaring them, throwing into the message the whole force of the preacher’s personality; intellectual force sustained and increased by unremitting study, and thus commanding a hearing and an interested attention; Biblical study, as furnishing the preacher’s model and material and promoting his mental growth; friendliness and personal sympathy with the hearers; the spirit of prayer, in conscious dependence on God; finally, and not least in importance, we are counselled to keep in mind that preaching, in the narrow sense of the word, is only one, and not always the chief, of the multifarious functions by which the “effectiveness” of the ministry is attained. These seem to me the chief points of the several writers. Of course, thus detached from their setting and grouped in a syllabus, they lose their impressive force. But they are every one true, and every one important.

degree in which Sunday is observed. But that improvement is in no sense due to Proudhon's forcible argument. Men read it and praised it, and then went on just as they had been doing. It was only the influence of the Church that was effective. Men will yield to the "categorical imperative" of a divine law when they will yield to nothing else. Take away the religious sanction of Sunday, and its hold on the public mind is gone. This religious sanction is what the Sunday issue of secular journals habitually undermines. Hence the deliberate assertion that such issue is evil, and only evil, and that continually. Editors and publishers may not, doubtless do not, think so; nevertheless, such is the fact.

IV.—BUNYAN, THE ALLEGORIST AND PREACHER, AS A STUDY FOR MINISTERS.

BY J. O. MURRAY, D.D., DEAN OF PRINCETON COLLEGE.

THE recently published volume, "John Bunyan, his Life, Times and Work," by the Rev. John Brown, Minister of the Church at Bunyan Meeting, Bedford, England, has roused fresh interest in the author of "The Pilgrim's Progress." For the first time since Bunyan died have the means been at hand for a true measure of the man and his work, intellectually and spiritually. This, the latest biography, has with exacting industry gathered from all sources whatever throws light upon the remarkable career of this remarkable man. There is a gap in the library of every minister who does not own the book—a gap which will not be filled till Mr. Brown's biography of Bunyan stands on the shelves. A homiletical study of Bunyan cannot fail to make more effective preachers. For such a study, Dr. Stebbins' edition of Bunyan's work in four volumes is a necessary equipment. Few, even of comparatively well-read scholars, are aware of the variety and extent of Bunyan's writings. Everybody has heard of "The Pilgrim's Progress." Many have known of his "Grace Abounding," and his "Holy War." A few may have glanced at his treatises on the "Jerusalem Sinner Saved," "Solomon's Temple Spiritualized," "The Holy City, or the New Jerusalem," and his remarkable dialogue on "The Life and Death of Mr. Badman," of which Mr. Froude makes so much account in his *Memoirs of Bunyan* (English Men of Letters' Series). But that he was a writer on theology, that he attempted poetry, that his "Divine Emblems" have in them a store of illustration for truths in religion, that, in a word, his works fill four volumes of 500 pages each, in double column, most people do not know. In suggesting and commending this homiletical study of Bunyan, it is natural to begin with his great allegory, "The Pilgrim's Progress." Yet there are certain traits common to all the writings of Bunyan which make him

worthy of close and special study by the ministry. These traits are found in allegories and tracts and sermons alike.

The first claim for homiletical acquaintance with Bunyan is, that he is not only a "well of English undefiled," but has the art of putting standard truths in a telling way. It is, indeed, no small gift that of using our noble English tongue in his masterly fashion. It is the everyday speech of the people which makes the warp and woof of dialogue in the allegories—of argument and appeal in his treatises. He avoids all high-sounding terms, chooses homely words or sentences which are idiomatic and racy. His diction is all alive because he uses these live words. He loves plain, short words. In the dialogue between Christian and Faithful, an analysis of two speeches of Faithful shows that out of 183 words in the first, 99 are words of one syllable; of 132 words in the second, 120 are monosyllables. While this is true of his diction, his style at times reaches the perfection of prose. A finer bit of English prose does not exist than is found in the closing portions of the first and second parts of "The Pilgrim's Progress." In fact, Bunyan's prose is admirable always for its clear, strong, direct and idiomatic power.

Now, the value of familiarity with such writing is to the preacher inestimable. His besetting sin is the use of scholastic terms. Many of his studies bring him into necessary connection with technical if not scholastic diction. In fact, much that preachers are compelled to read, from the daily newspaper to the last scientific treatise, is very far removed from that plain, direct style which is the soul of preaching. Such authors as Bunyan are needed as correctives. Our English diction of that time is in some respects the best. Witness the all-surviving excellence of King James' Version of our Bible. The preacher who will *study* our language as it stands on the pages of Bunyan will never speak in an unknown tongue. His style will be alive with the nervous, strong, Saxon speech men use when they make bargains, or send telegrams, or put out fires.

Again: all Bunyan's writings disclose a knowledge of the human heart in its relations to salvation by Christ, which is, in its way, quite as wonderful as Shakespeare's knowledge of that heart in all its workings. It would, in fact, be difficult to say whether that knowledge were the more full and accurate in respect to the regenerate or the unregenerate experience. It seems to come to him by a sort of spiritual intuition. Mr. Spurgeon, or Mr. Moody, will often remind any one familiar with Bunyan of the same trait, and it is one great source of their power. It may be thought, indeed, that all this is something which a minister can gain only through his own experiences in the cure of souls. But, as in the study of medicine, the reading of treatises on disease precedes the clinic or the hospital, so Bunyan's diagnosis of spiritual diseases and follies and dangers may first be studied with great advan-

tage. Every minister has need to be something of a spiritual anatomist. He has to minister often to minds diseased, the seat of the malady being far below the surface. If not needed so much for pulpit ministrations, this knowledge is needed sorely for those private and sacred dealings with the wounded conscience which tax sometimes the skill and patience of the wisest man. Any help in this quarter will be welcomed, and the study of Bunyan is commended earnestly. His favorite method in his sermons or treatises is the use of a catechetical method. He will carry on a set of questions and answers, which not only wonderfully enliven the discourse, but let in the sunlight to every nook and cranny of the heart. Witness, in his "Jerusalem Sinner Saved," the series of objections which Peter answers in his Pentecostal sermon; or in the sermon on the "Greatness of the Soul," the whole of what he calls "the fifth use and application."

This knowledge of the heart is seen also in the characters which fill the pages of his allegories. Mr. Timorous and Mistrust, Mr. Worldly-Wise-man, Mr. By-Ends, Captain Conviction, and Lord Will-be-Will, Mr. Desires-Awake and the Recorder, these, with a host of others like Mr. Ready-to-halt and Mr. Fearing, are life-studies, no abstractions, they are vital all through. Cut them and they would bleed. It has been said, indeed, with a good deal of insight, that "Bunyan's men are not merely life-portraits, but English portraits, men of the solid, practical, unimpassioned Midland race." Whoever acquaints himself with these men in Bunyan's pages will be no sciolist in human nature. He will see every side and phase of Christian experience, every side and phase of unbelieving doubt, sinful pride and impenitent evasions of duty.

Bunyan's allegories have, however, for the preacher a *special* homiletical value. They all belong to a comparatively late period in his life, and are the ripe fruit of his Christian career. His work as preacher and author began with his residence in Bedford, 1655. The years from 1660 to 1672 were spent in Bedford County Jail. "A careful examination of all the evidence," says Mr. Brown, "points to the following conclusions, namely, that, three years after his twelve years' imprisonment was over, Bunyan was again in prison during the winter and early spring of 1675-6; that this time he was a prisoner in the town jail on Bedford Bridge; and that it was during this later imprisonment he wrote his memorable dream." He began almost immediately to plan a Second Part. But his first idea was to "complete the picture by a contrast." This was the origin of his "Life and Death of Mr. Badman," presented to the world in a familiar dialogue between Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive. Whatever merits there are in this work (and they are great), they did not satisfy the popular desire or the artistic sense—as any completion or counterpart of "The Pilgrim's Progress." It is a

dialogue, not an allegory, and something in the latter vein was called for. Hence, in 1682, "The Holy War" was published, of which Macaulay has said, it would have been our greatest religious allegory if "The Pilgrim's Progress" had never been written. Evidently, however, Bunyan felt that he could give the world something more in the same line precisely with his "Pilgrim's Progress." So, in 1685—three years only before his death—the Second Part was published. He had hit upon the true conception, viz., to "supplement the story of Christian's Pilgrimage by that of his wife and children; the record of the religious life in man by the story of that same life as it shows itself in woman." If our readers will turn to the words of Gaius when Great-Heart conducts the pilgrims to his house of entertainment, Bunyan's conception of the part women are to play under the Gospel will be found charmingly set forth. It is too long for quotation. And it is an interesting conjecture, which has on its face every mark of credibility, that, in Christiana, Bunyan was "idealizing his second wife, Elizabeth, who, in the Swan Chamber, so nobly confronted judges and magistrates in his behalf; while, in the gentler character of Mercy, we have his heart-remembrance of her who had been the wife of his youth in the far-off Elston days." Here, however, all personal reminiscence ends.

These wonderful allegories stand, then, thus grouped: "Pilgrim's Progress," Part I., written between 1676 and 1677, published in 1687. "The Holy War," published in 1682. "The Pilgrim's Progress," Part II., 1685. For convenience of discussion, we shall consider the two parts of "The Pilgrim's Progress" together. Their *homiletical* study will open to the preacher a mine rich in points of apt and telling illustration. That sermons should have in them an illustrative element goes without saying. Truth illustrated is apt to be truth remembered. The merit of the modern school of preaching is largely in its freer use of illustration. The merit, but also the danger. That no part of pulpit discourse needs more careful handling is plain. If the illustrations overbalance the thought, they sacrifice instruction to amusement. If they do not send it home, but divert attention from it, they are drags on the wheels of thought. The only thing worth having in this line is an illustration which illustrates. Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" is a mine of such. They are found in his scenes and characters both. Some of them have been often used and have become hackneyed. The Slough of Despond, the Wicket-gate, the Enchanted Arbor, the Valley of Humiliation, Christian and Hopeful, Giant Despair, and Giants Pope and Pagan, Great Heart and Mercy, are very familiar, but more so to readers of a past generation than to readers of this. But, as it is a great mistake in the study of Shakespeare to overlook his minor scenes and characters, so in Bunyan; it is here that the preacher will

oftenest find matter to illustrate his teachings. For in all parishes these characters are living to-day. Mr. Pliable, Mr. Talkative (how many of them the prayer-meetings are well acquainted with!), Mr. Worldly-Wiseman, Mr. Timorous, Mr. Mistrust, Mr. By-Ends, Mr. Hold-the-World, Mrs. Inconsiderate, Mrs. Bat's-Eyes, Mrs. Light-Mind, and the "very brisk lad that came out of the country of Conceit, whose name was Ignorance"—the catalogue could be indefinitely extended and every one of them made to "point a moral." In all public discourses, an apt quotation is a "nail driven in a sure place." To this, pulpit discourse is no exception. "The Pilgrim's Progress" abounds in short, telling sentences, which fix themselves in the soul of hearers as with a barb. As when Christiana says of Talkative: "Religion hath no place in his heart, or house, or conversation; all he hath lieth in his tongue, and his religion is to make a noise therewith"; or to Mr. By-Ends: "You must also own Religion in his rags, as well as when in his silver slippers; and stand by him, too, when bound in irons, as well as when he walketh the streets with applause." Bunyan seldom indulges in a vein of humor, but when he does, the humor, though quiet, is very effective. Thus, in the second part of "The Pilgrim's Progress," Mr. Brisk, a man of some breeding and that pretended to religion, but a man that stuck very close to the world," is much taken with Mercy because of her housewifely thrift, and makes love to her. Finding out that all her toil in making garments was for the poor, "he forbore to come at her again." "And when he was asked the reason why, he said that Mercy was a pretty lass, but troubled with ill conditions." Dean Stanley began his course of lectures as Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford with a quotation from "The Pilgrim's Progress," where Christian is shown the "rarities of that place" in the Palace Beautiful—adding that the simple sentences "contain a true description of the subjects, method and advantages of the study of Ecclesiastical History." The whole allegory is rich in such passages, which the preacher on ordinary or special occasions may use most effectively in illustrating or making his points. They serve often a better purpose than anecdotes, are more pointed, and have more weight.

The study of these allegories can do a further service for ministers in cultivating the true use of imagination in sermon-making. No public speaker can reach the highest point of effectiveness who has not this faculty trained for use on fit occasions. There may be people now who think that such a faculty as imagination has no place in preaching. They say they do not want *flowery* sermons. Nobody does whose opinion is worth having. But imagination rightly used will not give flowery sermons, but live and solemn sermons. There were people in Bunyan's day who took exceptions to his way of presenting truth. To meet these, he begins his "Pilgrim's Progress"

with an apology in rhyme. It is not much in the way of poetry, but it is witty and true :

*"But they want solidness. Speak, man, thy mind!
They drown the weak; metaphors make us blind.
Solidity indeed becomes the pen
Of him that writeth things divine to men.
But must I needs want solidness, because
By metaphors I speak? Were not God's laws,
His Gospel laws, in olden times held forth
By shadows, types and metaphors? Yet loath
Will any sober man be to find fault
With them, lest he be found for to assault
The Highest Wisdom."*

Whoever of the readers of the HOMILETIC MONTHLY have heard Mr. Moody describe the interview between Joseph of Arimathea and Pilate when the counsellor went in to beg the body of Jesus, will know what such use of a historic imagination can do for a preacher. Whoever has read in Edersheim's "Life of Christ" the story of Judas Iscariot's crime can appreciate what such a faculty can do. Nor is it only in reconstructing the sacred history that this faculty comes in play. It would be easy to cite from Jeremy Taylor—that almost perfect contrast to Bunyan in all other respects—passages in which this faculty brings to the Christian teacher the choicest aid.

Now, the study of such an allegory as "The Pilgrim's Progress" is the best possible education for the imaginative writing by the preacher. It is a perfect model. It stimulates while it regulates. It never sacrifices the spiritual end in view to any desire for showing off the writer's powers. And when the preacher has so thoroughly studied Bunyan as to have his soul uplifted by his visions and saturated with his spirit, he is so far forth trained to use the imaginative faculty in presenting truth. Surely there is such a field for the preacher to occupy. He needs must occupy it sparingly perhaps; but if he gives himself to it, and has in him anything of the original power, there will be times when his sermon will be all the richer, and weightier too, for its employment.

V.—APPLIED CHRISTIANITY. NO. I.

THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE ENORMOUS GROWTH OF OUR CITIES.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D., BROOKLYN, N. Y.

"What a fermenting vat lies simmering and hid in the great city!"—CARLYLE.

THE history of the great cities of the world is, substantially, the history of mankind. Not only have they played a conspicuous part in the political affairs of nations, but they have originated and determined the social and intellectual, the moral and spiritual conditions and destiny of the various peoples and communities that have dwelt